

 A DIS=

praise of the life of a  
Courtier, and a commenda-  
cion of the life of the la-  
bouring man,

(.)

M.DXLVIII.

CVM PRIVILEGIO  
AD IMPRIMEN-  
DVM SOLVM.





¶ Unto the right noble  
William Marques of North-  
hamton, Earle of Essex & lorde  
Bar, your assured louyng frēd  
Fraunces Bziant knight, one  
of the kynges most honora-  
ble prync Chamber, Desi-  
reth to you perpetuall  
health and honoz.



IT IS not  
lōg agone  
(my verye  
synguler  
good lord)  
that I found  
you looking  
in a lytell  
boke called in the Frenche lan-  
guage Mesprise de la court, et  
lalouage de la vie rustique, whi-  
che is to saye in Englishe, the  
Dispraise of the Courte, & the  
a.ii. laude

The p̄face.

laude of the rustical life. And  
when I demaunded of you what  
booke it was, after your accu-  
stomed gentlenes, you were cō-  
tented that I should for y tyme  
haue it, and loke on it, and I so  
doyng: after that I had in part  
ouerlone it, I do ensute you I  
toke great pleasure therin, and  
not without good reason, for  
asmuche as the matter was not  
onely pleasaunt and fruitfull,  
but also full in euery where of  
olde auncient stories and wyse  
saynges of the noble and no-  
table Philosophers & clerkes.  
And at our nexte metyng toge-  
ther, partly at your request I  
promised to turne thesame out  
of Frenche into our maternall  
tong, whiche you right wel ac-  
cepted. And so at conuenient  
laysure

The preface.

layscale (as ye may see) I haue  
finished thesame, praiyng your  
good lordship to take my poore  
labor in gre, & not only in suche  
a trifle as this is, but in any  
thyng els that I may do you  
seruice and pleasure in, ye shal  
fynde me as moost bounden, e-  
uer prest and redy alwel for the  
great goodnes shewed vnto me  
by your moost wise father du-  
ryng his dayes whom I toke  
as a special patron: But fur-  
ther hauyng respecte to your  
moost noble sister, my most good  
and gracious lady the Quene,  
I thynke me fortunate to em-  
ploy my poore engyn to that &  
to her highnes or to your good  
lordship should seme either ac-  
ceptable or agreable. This li-  
tle booke then, lette it come into  
a.iii. light



The p̄face.

light vnder your proteccion.  
And in suche wyse that if that  
ye thynke I haue erred in the  
translacion, not to impute it to  
bee so dooen for lacke of good  
wyll and louyng heart that I  
owe vnto you, but for lacke of  
knowlage of the stozies, which  
I do professe is hard for to vn-  
derstand for one of no greater  
litterature then I professe me  
to be. Thus almightie God  
sende you well to fare, and to  
prosper in honor more & more  
to y<sup>e</sup> cōfōrte of al your frendes,  
and me, that to my power ye  
may assuredly nomber me  
among that sorte.

To

To the right reuerende  
and worthy Prelate my lord  
Williyam de Prat bishop of  
Cleremoite, Antony Alay-  
gre sendeth gretynge.



**I**T IS not many  
daies past sithes  
I beyng retyred  
for a tyme (my  
good lord) into y  
village, and there takynge the  
commoditie and pleasure of the  
fayre swete fieldes, a certaine  
frende of myne sent vnto me a  
worke in the Castilian tong of  
the lord Antony of Gueuera  
bishop of Mondouent, & Chro-  
nicler of the Emperour: in rea-  
dyng whereof I founde great  
pleasure and profite. The title  
of the booke is the Disprailynge  
of the Court, and the Praise of  
a.iiii. the



the life rusticall, dedicate vnto  
the kyng of Portingal in suche  
sort, that the better to kepe and  
to hold the wise sentence & eru-  
dicions therein cōteined, I em-  
ployed certaine houres after  
supper to trāslate thesame into  
Frenche, not thinkyng among  
mine other simple workes euer  
to put it abrode, but after that  
I had cōmunicat y<sup>e</sup> same with  
some of my frendes that haue  
knowledge of the Spanishe  
tong, to leaue it in a corner to  
make it meate for Rattes and  
Mise. Now for trueth, the first  
exempler was so euil deuided,  
and the leaues so out of order  
that I gaue charge to y<sup>e</sup> Scri-  
uener that was my wyfe neigh-  
bour to coppe them, & as who  
should say to write it faire and  
in

in order, the whiche so euil went  
about it, although by ignoꝛāce  
he could not ensue y<sup>e</sup> originall,  
yet for to gette a litle money he  
solde where his pleasure was y<sup>e</sup>  
copies so vncumly set together  
that I was soꝝy and repentant  
that euer I consumed the tyme  
to traſlate it, till at the last mo-  
ued by the persuaſiō of Annas  
Regyn Vicar generall, and by  
Peter Cister your aduocate, by  
them twaine my great frendes,  
I thought it better to pꝛeſente  
to the eyes of all men this euil  
translated, then to ſuffre lenger  
those euil exemplers ſo corrup-  
ted to my blame in y<sup>e</sup> hādes of  
those that haue no right iudge-  
ment, to know from whom the  
faute came: wherfoze my good  
loꝝde, vnder your pꝛudent fa-

nor a correction I do aduētūre  
 herein my name and fame ac-  
 cording to my knowlege, tru-  
 syng assuredly that your only  
 name shal suffice to vanquish  
 and set aside this slander, the  
 whiche slander as enemye to  
 learned men, cease not to with-  
 draw those that haue good wil  
 and minde to studie: I say this  
 that as me seemeth it is well  
 worthie that worke of the wyle  
 bishop of Spayne be presented  
 to his semblable or superior in  
 learning in Fraunce, or rather  
 aboue him in knowlege & ver-  
 tuous maners. I will adde to  
 to this, that the graue sentēces  
 & perswasion to vertuous life  
 contained in this booke deserue  
 to be offered to you that are ac-  
 customed to vse the after suche  
 sorte



The auctour.

sorte y euery man haue plaine  
opinion of you that ye are sent  
of God to be protectoz and pa-  
tron of vertue, troubled & dis-  
pised. Therfore (my singuler  
good lozde, as one of y chiefest  
of the best sorte) I dedicate to  
you this my litle laboure, not  
that I thinke it worthy to cum  
into your handes, but for to be  
a perpetuall witnes that I do  
owe vnto you my seruice with  
all reuerēce, to the whiche most  
humbly I reconimende me.

From your cytie of Cleremonte  
this first day  
of Maye.

Anno. M.D. xlii.

**A dispraise of the life of  
the Courtier, and a cōmenda-  
cion of the life of the husbandman, compos-  
sed in the Castilian tounge by the reuered  
father in God the lord Antony of Gueuera  
bishop of Mondouent and Chronicler to  
the Emperour Charles. And out of Ca-  
stilian drawen into frenche by Antō-  
ny Maygre, and now out of the  
frenche tounge into our ma-  
ternal lāguage, by sir Fraun-  
ces Wyant knight, one  
of the kynges most  
honorable cham-  
ber.**

**The first Chapiter.**

**Of certaine courtiers whiche  
ought to complaine of none,  
but of them selues.**



**A**fter that the no-  
ble prince Phi-  
lippe of Mace-  
dony had ouer-  
runne the Athe-  
nience, on a tyme  
he beyng at supper amonges  
certaine of his Philosophers,  
asked



The Courtiers life .

asked them whiche was the  
greatest thyng in the worlde?  
One of them answered, that to  
his thinking it was the water,  
because there was moze of that  
onely then of any other thyng  
vnder the skye . Another sayd  
it was the Sunne, seyng his  
only brightnes doeth suffice to  
geue light to the yearth, to the  
starres, and to the water. Ano-  
ther sayd it was the great hill  
Olympe, whose heigth passeth  
the cloudes . Another sayd it  
was the most renoumed gyant  
Athlas, on whose sepulcre was  
builded the feareful mountain  
Ethna . Another sayd it was  
Homer, that in his life was so  
much praised & after his death  
so much bewailed, þ̄ vii. great  
citties made warre amōges the  
selves

selves for y<sup>e</sup> recouery of his bo-  
 nes, to kepe them as a relike.  
 The last & most wise Philoso-  
 pher sayd, that nothing in this  
 world ought to be called great,  
 but that heart whiche esteemeth  
 no great thinges. O high and  
 noble s<sup>e</sup>tence, since that by that  
 it is geuen vs to vnderstande,  
 that as touchyng the riches &  
 honoz of this worlde, moze is y<sup>e</sup>  
 glozpe of him that settes light  
 by them, then he that hath the  
 the cast for to get them. Titus  
 Linius praiseth and neuer ceas-  
 seth to praise, the good consull  
 Marcus Curius in the house of  
 whom, came Ambassadors of  
 the Samnytes for to recouer  
 certaine landes that he had of  
 theirs, offeryng to him for the  
 same plentie of golde & siluer:  
 He

He hauyng in his hand certai  
herbes to put in his pot for his  
diner, answered them after this  
sort, ye shuld haue offered this  
money to the Capitaines that  
disdaines to dresse their owne  
diners, and not to me that desi-  
reth no greater riches then to  
be lorde ouer their lordes.

Deserued not more praise this  
Marcus Curius in setting light  
those talentes of golde of the  
Sannytes, then the Consull  
Lucullus for robbing them of  
Spartes: Deserued not more  
glorie the wise Crates for the  
riches that he cast into sea, then  
the kyng Nabugodonoser for  
the treasure that he robbed fro  
the Temple: To your iudge-  
ment, did not they of the Isles  
of Bariates deserue more ho-  
nor



**A Dispraise of**

noꝝ, agreyng not to haue amōg  
theim neither golde noꝝ siluer,  
then the couetous Grekes that  
toke by foꝛce & pilled þe mynes  
of Spayne? Was not moꝛe  
greater the heart of the good  
Emperour Augustus in setting  
light the Empire, then of his  
vnclē Iulius Caesar that did take  
possession? It is nedeful to haue  
wysedome, experience to oꝛder  
it, cunnynge to set it furth, & foꝛ-  
tune to brynge it to good ende:  
but to vpholde it and kepe it,  
had nede of great strength, and  
foꝛ to dispraise it, a good heart,  
because that which is sene with  
the eyes is moꝛe elier to dis-  
praise, then that thyng whiche  
we haue already in our hādes.  
It hath been seen that many  
noble men hath had foꝛtune so  
muche

much at their desires that they  
haue enterprised a thing almost  
impossible to attaine, & whiche  
after for lacke of good discrea-  
cion wer not able to kepe it.

Wherby it is to be vnderstāde  
that the greatnes of the heart  
doeth not cōsist so muche in ob-  
teynng the thing that we de-  
sire to haue, as it is to set light,  
& contemne that that one loues  
best. Apolenius Thyaneus, did  
he not dispise his owne proper  
countrey & trauailed thorow-  
out all Asia for to go to see the  
Philosopher Hyarchus in Pnde?  
Aristotle leauyng the familia-  
ritie he had with Alexander, re-  
turned to his owne house for to  
rede Philosophy. Nicodrus no-  
thing extemed the treasure that  
the great king Cyrus gaue him

b.i.

for to



A Dispraise of

for to folowe him in þ warres.  
The Philosopher Anail'us re-  
fused thze times þ pzincipalltie  
of Athenes, sayng: he had ra-  
ther be seruañt to þ good, then  
a chastiser of the euil. Cecilius  
Metellus a valiaunt capitaine  
Roman, neither would accepte  
the estate of Dictator that to  
him was geuen, nor þ office of  
Consull that to him was offe-  
red: sayng, that he would eate  
in rest, that whiche with great  
trauail he had gotten in þ war.  
The mperour Dyoclecian (as  
it is manifest) forsoke with his  
free wyll the Empire, for no o-  
ther cause, but to fle the brute  
of the cōmon speche, and to liue  
in rest at home. Worthy is he  
to be praised that hath þ hatte  
to care litle for an Empire or a  
realme

realme: but yet more is he woꝝ-  
thy that can sette light by him  
selfe and not to be gouerned by  
his owne will: for there is no  
man in this worlde, but that he  
is more in loue with that he de-  
sireth, then with þe he hath: but  
howe coueteous oꝝ ambitious  
so euer any mā be, if he trauail  
x. daies for that which he hath,  
he will bestowe an hundꝛeth to  
obtain that whiche he desireth,  
because that we do not bestow  
our laboꝝ as we shuld, but we  
stowe it after our desires. If  
we do trauaile, if we be trou-  
bled, if we cannot slepe, it is not  
foꝝ necessitie, but foꝝ to satisfie  
our wil and appetite. And that  
is woꝛst of all, we not conten-  
tyng our selves w<sup>th</sup> that we can:  
do procure to can that that  
b.ii. we

A Dispraise of

we desire. O how many haue  
we seen in the court of princes,  
to whom it had been better for  
them that thei had been no lordes  
of their will, & lesse of their  
desires, because sythens they  
did that they might & desired,  
begon to do that thei ought not  
to do: If the man y<sup>e</sup> offēdes vs  
ought to aske pardon, let euery  
mā aske pardon to himself be-  
fore any other, for in my life I  
found neuer none y<sup>e</sup> hurte me so  
muche as my self, I haue been  
only the procurer of mine own  
hurt. Who made me fall into  
pryde, but mine only presump-  
tion and fondnes: Who durste  
haue prisioned my sorowfull  
heart with enuye, but lacke of  
naturall gouernement: Who  
durst haue inflamed myne in-  
wardes



wardes with the fyre of yre, if  
it had not been my great impa-  
cience: what is the cause I am  
so great a gurmander, but that  
my bringyng vp was to deli-  
cate: what is the cause I haue  
not departed with my goodes  
to the pooze and nedye, but the  
excessiue loue I had to my ri-  
ches: who gaue leue to my flesh  
to rise against my folish desire,  
if my heart had not been fixed  
in voluptuous pleasures: O  
my soule, of all this damage &  
open faultes, to whom do you  
lay y<sup>e</sup> blame, but to myne owne  
sensualitie: Great folly it is, y<sup>e</sup>  
these beyng within the house, to  
seke for him without: euen so it  
is with vs a manifest faulte of  
experiēce, when seying in vs the  
blame, and yet charge another  
b.iii. with

A Dispraise of

with the occasion: by this we ought to perceiue that we shall neuer cease to complaine vntil the tyme we begyn to amende. Oh, howe often & many tymes hath vertue fought with the botome of our cōsciences, whiche stirred vs to be good, and our sensualitie resisted, whiche is vaine stowardnes, by the which battail folowed a darke corrupte iudgement: but to cōclude, we of oure selues as of our selues are very miserable. The Poete Ouid reherfeth the louyng Philis the Rodian cōplainyng of her selfe & sayeth: Oh Demophon, if I had not bestowed tyme to loue the, and siluer, and shippes, for the expediciō of thy voiage, thou durst not well to haue gone, nor I to haue



haue bewailed thy departyng,  
in suche wise that with my own  
wepons was my bodye wound-  
ded. If we beleue Iosephus in  
that he did wryte of Maryana, &  
Homer, in that he sayd of He-  
lene, Plutarch in that he spake  
of Cleopatra, Virgil of y<sup>e</sup> quene  
Dydo, Theophrast of Pollysene,  
Zantippe of Cammilla, Assena-  
rius of Clodia: All these ladies &  
excellent princes neuer founde  
them selves so deceiued by their  
louers as thei wer by beleuing  
their owne proper counsels, and  
lightly consenting to the same.

If to Suetone, Zantippe and  
Plutarch we will geue credite &  
beleue those thynges that they  
declare of Pompe, Pyrrhus,  
Hanniball, & the Consull Ma-  
rius, of the Dictator Caesar, of  
Marke Antony & many others

A Dispraise of

we shall finde they blamed not  
fortune so muche to be vāqui-  
shed by others, as in their pro-  
speritie they wer ruled by their  
owne aduise and counselles.

It is true, that often tymes the  
opinion of our kinne & frendes  
maketh vs to enter into busyn-  
nes out of the waye of reason,  
not carpyng but for a folishe a-  
uauncement of goodes and ri-  
ches. And at the ende when by  
their setting forth one hath en-  
terprised a certaine busynes of  
importaunce whiche doeth re-  
quire ayd and helpe, those same  
be the laste that sheweth them-  
selues helping frendes: whiche  
is y occasion many tymes that  
men cānot returne frō enterpri-  
syng suche thinges as neither  
shall growe to their honor nor  
profite

profite. Many men say that they haue enemies, recountyng them often without findyng nūber: Although it be true if it be well noted, that none haue oftener oz a greater enemy then him self. And the most greatest daunger that I see, is that vnder the shadowe to. p̄fette & make better my selfe. my selfe is the cause of my destruction. The Philosopher Neotidas on a tyme beyng asked which was the beste counsell that a manne might take? He answered, the counsell of others with the dispraisyng of his owne: and he sheweth the cause, for that the corruption of mā is suche, that often he searcheth in him self with great pain, that whiche in the head of another, he fyndeth  
b. v. with



W great ease: then it foloweth,  
that in the best tyme of our life  
our owne life deceiueth vs, the  
euil cometh furth on eucry side,  
heuy thoughtes ouertaketh vs  
our frendes leaueth vs, perse-  
cutozs tormenteth vs, troubles  
maketh an ende of vs, and am-  
bicion burieth vs. If we be-  
holde this thyng: what we be:  
wherof we be: and wherfore we  
be, we shall fynde that our be-  
ginnyng is obliuion, our mid-  
dle age trauail, the ende sorow,  
and altogether an open errour.  
Then se how heuy is the cour-  
tiers life, as also how daunge-  
rous the waye is, where as bee  
stoones to stumble at, myer to  
sticke fast in, yse for to falle on,  
pathe wayes for to lose him in,  
water for to passe thozow, the-  
fcs

**The Courtiers life.**

for to be afrayde on, great  
affaires and busynes to do, so  
that harde it is for any to goe  
there as they would, and more  
harder to arriue there as they  
desire. All these thynges haue  
we sayd, to the entent that the  
Courtiers may vnderstand that  
neither I nor they can chose y  
good waye and leaue the euill;  
voide that that hurtes vs, and  
conserue that whiche profiteth  
vs, folowe reason and plucke  
awaye the occasion: but if by  
chaunce some good fall to vs,  
we thanke fortune, and if  
euil come to vs, then  
we do put the fault  
in her.

**The**

A Dispraise of

The.ii. Chapiter

**C** How that none ought to counsel  
another to go to the court nor when  
he is there to come from it, but  
every man to chuse the life  
that best he liketh.



**A**ristarch the great Phi-  
losopher of Theban,  
sayd that tyme and mā  
was so diuers, that hard it was  
for the most wisest to chuse that  
to them was good, and to kepe  
them from that to them is euil.

There is nothing more true,  
for we see dayly, with the same  
that one is healed, another fal-  
leth sicke: with that that one  
waxeth better, another waxeth  
woyle: with that that one is a-  
mended, another is put doune:  
and to conclude, with that litle  
thing that one is cōtent withal  
another is in dispaire. The ler-  
ned Alchymus was by his Moe-  
coenas



coenas kyng Demetrius, asked  
whetein specially did consist þ  
greatest trauail of the worlde?  
He answered, there is few thin-  
ges but in them there is either  
trauail or suspicion, but aboue  
all the mooste excessive trauail  
that a man may haue, is neuer  
to be satisfied: And that this  
is true, we perceiue that when  
a litle thing cōtenteth vs, how  
lytle soeuer it be, we make it  
our paradise with þ rest of our  
life: whiche seldome chaunseth  
to fewe mē, because that liuyng  
as we liue, not beyng cōtented,  
would assaie & knowe if it wer  
good to be a kyng, a pzince, a  
knight, a married man, a religi-  
ous or a marchaunt, a laborer,  
a shepeherd, or of some other  
estate. And at the ende, when al  
is

**A Dispraise of**

is proued, it shall be harde to  
fynde where we would rest, so  
vncostaunt is the lightnes of  
menne. The wise determineth  
to chole the best is the meane.

A simple creature is lightly  
contented with a small thyng,  
but he that hath a great harte,  
thinks that pouertie is a gre-  
uous life, like as they that be  
of high estate feare<sup>y</sup> fall of for-  
tune. Plato was in his yong  
yeres very worldeky, as he that  
had sene muche, aswell in the  
warres as in offices, in whiche  
he was vled, and also in handy  
craftes. On a tyme it was as-  
ked him wherin he had founde  
most quietnes and rest: He an-  
swered, there is no estate of life  
wherin is not mutabilitie, ther  
is no honoz where is<sup>n<sup>o</sup></sup> perill, no  
riches

riches where is no trauail, no  
prosperitie but it endeth, nor also  
pleasure but faileth: but when  
all is sayd, I neuer founde so  
much quietnes of mynde, as  
since I left myne offices in Ci-  
ties, withdrawing me to my  
booke: signifiyng, that as long  
as we liue seruauntes of the  
worlde, we desire all, we proue  
all, we procure al, then al thin-  
ges well sene & tasted, all thin-  
ges do anoye vs: the greatest  
parte of our disquietnes com-  
meth hercof, that the aboun-  
daunce we haue, semeth to vs  
lytle, and the lytle of others, se-  
meth to vs muche. We saye  
that our wealth is trauail, and  
that the euill happe of others is  
rest: we condemne others actes  
and we allowe our owne: we  
watche



watche to gette somewhat, and  
sodently we slepe to lese it a-  
gain: we immagyn that al men  
liues content, & we alone nedp:  
And yet the worst is, we beleue  
that that we dreame, and put  
not our trust in that that we se  
befoze our iyen. What waye  
one ought to folowe oz what e-  
state he ought to chose, none  
can well knowe nor counsell,  
because y<sup>e</sup> thyng is so trouble-  
some and without good iudge-  
ment, by whiche many is decei-  
ued: If the sailyng on the sea  
be daungerous, so is the wal-  
king on the yearth troubleous.

As touchyng our life, we see  
that he that is whole, daily fal-  
leth sicke, the sicke dyeth, some  
other scapeth deadly daūgers,  
and some others lynyngs forth  
to

to death. As touching the wa-  
faryng men, a floure cometh he  
to his lodgyng that goeth soft-  
ly, as he that goeth hasty and  
loseth his way. He that is in  
fauor, liuyng in slothfull reste,  
had as muche neede of vphol-  
dyng, as he that continually  
sweates in trauail. Therfore  
I conclude, that there is no-  
thing in this worlde so certain,  
as that all thynges is vncer-  
taine.

Then let vs retorne to that  
we spake of: It is sayd that it  
is fearefull, to counsell any to  
marry, to study, to go to þ war,  
or to take vpon him any other  
thing, then that he is called to:  
because in this case none is so  
apte to receiue, þ to him is sayd  
as he is to receiue that whiche  
c. i. he

A Dispraise of

he is naturally inclyned to. Plutarcke greatly praiseth in his booke of the cōmon welth, & good Philosopher Plato (and not without cause) for he vsed a great policy, which was that there was no yong man entred into his schoole, but first he would proue him whether he was enclined to lernyng or no, so that those that he thought not apte to study, he sent them backe, causyng thē to vse their liues in p̄cōmon welth. Alcibiades the Greke mā be a sufficient wytnesse vnto you, whiche although he was yong brought to the schoole, and taught of a discrete maister, yet notwithstanding his inclinaciō was suche, that he professed himself wholly to the warres. To him that is  
borne



borne to weare a swerde by his  
side, it semeth him yll to wear a  
typpet about his necke, and he  
that loueth to kepe slepe, the  
court is nothyng fitte for him.  
To her that desireth marriage,  
it is hard to kepe her chaste: He  
that loueth to be a barber, why  
should he be made a Paynter.  
To counsel our friend to learne a  
crafte for to liue by, is but wel  
done: but especially to appoint  
him what crafte he ought to  
lerne, that me thynketh worthy  
to be reprovied: which brought  
the lawes of the Lacedemoni-  
ans, the Lacedemonians com-  
maundyng to the fathers vpon  
great paynes, to putte none of  
their chyl dren to no crafte, till  
they were. xliiii. yeres of age to  
see that in the age of discrecion  
c. ii. what

what their nature was enclined to. Let vs leaue this long communication, and speake of that we ought to aduertise the reader of: to counsell any to leaue the court, suche counsel I thinke not best to geue, nor yet wisdom for other to take, saying that there is doubte to counsell any in that they ought to do: Howbeit myne aduice is, that the sage persons chose to liue in a quiet state, and to dwell in suche a place, that he may leade a life without reproche, & christianly to dye. Oftentimes men do remoue from one countrey to another, from one toun to another, from one strete, from one house, from one companie to another: but to conclude, if that he had peine in the one, he  
Doeth

The Courtiers life.

Doeth cōplaine himself vtterly  
of the wronges of the others:  
And this is the reason, because  
he layeth y<sup>e</sup> faulte to the nature  
of the countrey, which nothing  
els is but his owne euil nature.  
What more shal we say, but in  
Courtes, in cyties, in villages,  
and in other places, is seen the  
vertuous and the discrete cor-  
rected, and the vicious not bla-  
med. The wicked with their  
wickednes sercheth by all mea-  
nes to make themselues worse.  
And likewise doth to y<sup>e</sup> vertuous  
with their vertues, make them  
selfes better in what state soe-  
uer he be called. As for the pre-  
lates, there is no charge in the  
Churche so daungerous but  
that a good conscience can a-  
uoyde it, but a weake or cor-  
rupt cōscience may sone be cast  
c.iii. away



A Dispraise of

awaye: Like as the wilde rose  
from whence the Bee fetcheth  
her honny, and likewise y<sup>e</sup> Spi-  
der her poplō. The prince may  
do his deuor doyng iustice and  
not vsyng tyranny. The man  
of armes goyng to the warre &  
not hurtynge the pooze people.  
The religious may be contem-  
platiue in their cloyster with-  
out grudgyng. The married  
man may liue well in his house  
wout aduoutry. The riche mā  
geueth his goodes for Gods  
sake without vsury. The labo-  
rer in workyng, the shepeherde  
in keepyng his shepe without  
hurtynge his neighbours, and  
in like case of others. And to  
proue that it is true by y<sup>e</sup> scrip-  
ture in the state of kynges, Da-  
uid was good, and Saul euil,  
to

to the estate of Priestes, Mathias good, & Obnias naught.  
Of Prophetes, Daniel good,  
Balaam euil, Of Shepheherdes  
Abell good, Abimilech euil, Of  
wydowes Judithe good, Jezabel euil,  
Of riche Job good,  
Naball naught: A ykewise of  
the Apostles, S. Peter good,  
Judas was reproued. Then  
perceiue to what estate soeuer  
a mā commeth vnto, be it good  
or euil, the estate sheweth not y  
man, but the inclynacion of the  
parson. If we should counsell  
any man to liue in the village,  
he would saye he cannot agree  
with them of the village, if ye  
wyl counsell him to leaue the  
court, he will say that he hath a  
thousand busineses to do ther,  
If he be coulsailed to serue any

c.iii.

great

great lord, he will say that he hath nothing where to finde him: If we aduise him to be a religious, he will say that he cannot rise early, if to marry he wil say it wil greue him to here his litle children cry and wepe, to goe to studie it would trouble his braine, If he were cou=sailed to withdrawe him to his house, he would saye he could not liue without company.

Then presuppose that whiche is said, that none ought to cou=sell any to chose the life he will take concerning his honoꝝ & the wealth of his life, because afterwarde he will moze com=plaine him, of the counsell that he hath taken, then the euil that he hath suffeted.

The



The.iii.Chapiter.

**S**owe that a Courtier ought to  
leane the Court for not beyng in fa-  
uor, but beyng out of it, to the en-  
tent of that beyng out of it  
be more vertuous.



Vblius Minus sayth  
in his Annotaciōs  
that we ought to  
thinke many daies  
on that whiche we entend to do  
in one daie. The kyng Deme-  
trius, soonne of Antigonus was  
asked by one of his capitaines  
named Patroclus, wherefore he  
gaue not battail to his enemye  
Ptolome, scyng his strength,  
his witt and his nōber of men?  
He answered, that a deede ones  
done, is harde to call backe a-  
gain, and befoze a man begyn  
a harde enterpryse, he had neede  
of long counsell.

Agiselaus a

c.v.

wyse

wise capitaine of the Lyeaont-  
eng beyng forced to answer &  
Ambassadors of the Thebeans  
sayd: know not you O Thebe-  
ans that to determyne a thyng  
of importaunce, nothyng is me-  
ter then long studie.

Plutarch doth greatly praise  
the life of Sertoreius in that  
he was not rashe in determi-  
nyng, but graue in enterpri-  
syng. Suetone sayeth that  
Theemperour August was ne-  
uer hastye to gette frendes, but  
very diligent to kepe the when  
he had them. Of these ensam-  
ples, note what daūgier he fal-  
leth in, that is hasty in busines-  
ses and quicke in counsels.

None wyl wear a garment if it  
be not sowed: noꝝ eate the fruit,  
if it be not rype: noꝝ dꝛynke the  
wyne

The Courtiers life.

wyne, if it be not clere: noꝛ eate  
the flesh if it be not dꝛessed: noꝛ  
warne him with wode, if it be  
not dꝛye: Wherfoꝛe then do we  
counsell vs with grene counſel,  
whiche ſoner ſhall ſmudder vs  
then warne vs. The wiſe man  
ought to haue befoꝛe his eyes  
a ſober deliberaciō in his affai-  
res, foꝛ if he thynke one houre  
of that whiche he would ſay, he  
had nede thinke. x. of that that  
he would doo: wordes be but  
wordes, they may be coꝛrected,  
but neuer the vncōſidered dede  
The fault of this, is that euery  
man ſtudꝑeth to ſpeake, to diſ-  
pute, to iudge, but none to liue  
wel, noꝛ yet to dꝛye vertuoꝛuſly.  
The graue perſons that wyl  
conſerue their auctozitie may  
not be teſtie oꝛ ſtubburne in  
ſuche



A Dispraise of

such thinges as they enterprize  
no2 wilfull in that they take in  
hand, no2 fickil in that thei be-  
gyn: for one of the greatest fau-  
tes that a man may haue, is not  
to be founde true of his worde,  
and inconstant in that he hath  
begun. A noble harte ought to  
foresee that he is charged with  
and if it be iust and reasonable  
soner to dye, then not to do it:  
by the whiche noble hartes are  
knownen. If it were a thyng  
harde & almooste impossible A-  
chilles to flee Hector: Agiselaus  
to ouercome Brantes: to Alexā-  
der, Darrius: to Caesar Pōpenus:  
to Augustus, Marcus Antonius:  
to Silla, Mythridates: to  
Scipion Hanniball: and to the  
good Troian Dacebalus, these  
noble princes had neuer been  
so

The Courtiers life.

so muche esteemed as they bee,  
but that they vttered their no-  
ble courage. Then, good ad-  
uitce toynd with a noble harte,  
ought to gouerne great enter-  
pises. Then to our purpose,  
my maister the courtier sayth,  
he wyl leave the cursed life of  
the court, and go dye at home,  
sayng, y to liue in suche trou-  
ble is a continuall death. O  
how many & often tymes haue  
I hard these faire wordes, that  
neuer were folowed, excusyn-  
g them onely by the destiny of the  
court, in the whiche they were  
fast glued. When that a cour-  
tier lackes money, that any mā  
doeth hun displeasure, oz that  
he hath lost his proces: God  
knoweth howe many othes he  
maketh that he will forsake al,  
not

not to leaue his euil cōditions,  
 but because that his busyness  
 goeth backward: but long his  
 purpose lasteth not, for if our  
 courtier happe to cum to welth  
 or that he be inhaunted by his  
 prince, ye shall see his former  
 promises to waxe colde, his wil  
 and his desire to remaine there  
 in suche wise & ye would iudge  
 him to be naturally borne ther.  
 Fauor and couetuousnes gui-  
 deth the Courtier, so that one  
 groweth with the other, and at  
 the ende conuerted frō the ma-  
 ner of Christians to courtiers.  
 For all men knoweth that the  
 court is a place wher men may  
 get welth, and likewise & place  
 of mens vndoing: We haue  
 already reherſed the occasions  
 why men do withdraue them  
 from



from the court, some for lack of  
mony, some for pouertie, or not  
beyng in fauor, or for age, all  
these thynges be of necessitie &  
nothyng of free wyll, nor yet  
praise to them that so withdra-  
weth them for the causes afore  
sayd: but the true leuyng of the  
Courte, and of the worlde is,  
when y couttier is yong, strōg,  
in fauor, riche, & in helth, then  
with good harte to leaue the  
courte, to fynde in other places  
honest rest after his degre: this  
is sayd, to the entente that he  
whiche leaueth the court, shuld  
leaue it merily and without re-  
penting, for feare that after his  
sorowe is past, he would be a-  
shamed to retorne to thesame,  
where he may chaunse to haue  
great busines.

The

The proude and vnpacient  
men do many thinges in a day  
whiche he had nede to mourne  
for all the daies of their life.

A collozicke heade is nothyng  
mete for the court, for if he will  
be reuenged of the shames, in-  
iuries, crastes, & wronges, that  
in the court he shall fynde, let  
him trust that he shall suffre  
more in one houre, then he shal  
be able to reuenge in ten yere:  
whosoever leaueth the court let  
him leaue it for euermore: be-  
cause that if he wyll retorne to  
it again, & leaue his dwelling  
in the countrey, he may be like-  
ned to him, & hath a continual  
Ague: he that sinnes & mendes,  
and after retournes againe to  
synne, that synne is more gre-  
uous then & first. In lyke wise  
to

to leaue the court, and after re-  
turne to it, is so open a faulte  
that it cannot be hid, excepte ye  
will say, he goeth to sell vertue  
and to bye riches.

To our purpose, if we shuld  
aske of an auncient man, what  
hath been the whole course of  
his life, and that he would an-  
swere vs, he hath enterprised  
much, waded, spoken, sear-  
ched, founde and lost. &c. We  
would saye that his life hath  
been a dissembling folly. What  
shall we say then of our incon-  
stant Courtiers that dayly do  
thesame thynges? whiche for-  
gettyng themselves, for the ob-  
teinyng of a litle fauour, do a-  
gainst nature, flatter, & begge.  
Remember aboue all thynges  
gentle reader here & els where,  
D.i. that




that I speake not but of the vn  
discrete Courtiers that can not  
restraine their appetite with an  
honest cōtentaciō: which thing  
most chiefly causeth many sage  
& discrete persons to geue ouer  
the Courte, because to restraine  
the wil of the heart, is a greater  
paine then to content the body;  
for the bodye is soone weerye of  
sunnyng, but the heart is neuer  
satisfied in desirynge: One may  
knowe easily the compleccion  
of the bodye, but the mynde of  
the heart neuer, and to conten-  
tyng leise, for the heart at euery  
instaunt requireth nowe one  
thyng now another, and with-  
in a lytle tyme after forgetteth  
all. O dissemblyng heart that  
vnder a pzetēce to be clere and  
loyall, make men to iudge that  
hypocrysy

hypocrisie is deuotion, ambicio  
nobilitie, auarice husbandrye,  
crueltie zeale of iustice, muche  
bablyng eloquence, folishenes  
grauitie, & dissolucion diligēce:  
To conclude, that euery man  
ought to knowe how muche he  
may do: If a mā know himself  
to be ambitious, impatient, &  
couetous, let him go hardely to  
the court: And contrary, if the  
courtier fele his nature cōtent,  
peaceable, and desirynge rest &  
quietnes, let him be dwelling  
in the village, and he shall  
well knowe that he neuer  
knewe how to liue, til  
he had drawen him  
selte from the  
Court.

A Dispralle of  
The.iiii. Chapter.

Of the life that the Courtiers  
ought to leade, after that he  
hath lefte the Court.

 Yronydes a wyse &  
sage Philosopher,  
capitaine of the Bo-  
heciens sayd, that p-  
pudence of a man was as well  
known by retiryng from the  
euil, as in chosyng of the good,  
forasmuche as vnder the euil  
commonly the good can not be  
hid, but vnder the pzetence of  
good muche euil may be dissem-  
bled: euen muche lyke as the  
Antheme p begynnes Per signū  
crucis and endes in Sathanas &  
Barrabas: In like maner p great  
euils haue their beginnyng by  
sum pzetēce of fained goodnes,  
in suche sort that they be coun-  
terfeict



terfeict muche lyke Maskers,  
wzapt in swetenes as purgynge  
pyles, and gylte as is the Ru-  
barbe. Ther is no mā I thinke  
so mad that kepeth not himself  
in as muche as he can from cat-  
chyng euil, & specially frō open  
euil : but contrarywise, it were  
wysedome to kepe him frō that  
whiche is not altogether good.

Alexander the great, causing  
himselke to be healed of certain  
woundes that he had receiued  
in battail, was reprovued of his  
great minion Parmeno for put-  
tyng himselke into great ha-  
zard in the warre : To whom  
Alexander sayd, assure me my  
frende Parmeno of those that  
be dissemblyng frendes, for I  
wil be ware of them that be my  
open enemies.

D.iii. Alcybyades

**¶ Dispraise of**

Alcibyades, Agiselaus, Pyrrhus, Antigonus, Lentulus, and Iulius Caesar, were so circumspecte in these thynges that they wer alwayes vāquishers, and died in the hādes of their frendes, and specially because they chose the good and lefte the euil.

Then he that leaueth y<sup>e</sup> court ought not only for to see what he leaueth, but also what he taketh, cōsidering that as muche or more harde it is to contente him hauyng left the court, as it was afore in the desirynge to be in the court: what profiteth it to leaue the court wery & troubled, If thy harte can fynde no rest in the place whether thou resortest? Our bodye fulfilled with meates is led where one will haue it, but the heart is ne-  
uer

ner satisfied with desirynge, and would (if he might) be in fauor with princes of the courte, and on the other side at his ease in village. If the Courtier dayly haue mynde beyng at home, of the passions & afflictions that he had in the Court, it had been better for him neuer to haue gone fro it, because that in remembryng them, the thinkyng is more prickynge, & the mynde weaker to resist them.

In the court of princes chaunces often tymes that lacke of money or other great busynes makes a manne abstayne from doyng euil, the whiche beyng after in his house doeth suche dedes vnseemely to a gentlemā, that they deserue to be corrected, yea, and bitterly punished.

D.iiii.

There



There be also another sorte of men that forsakes the court to be moze idle at home: And suche would be reiected frō the number of honest menne, seying they chose y<sup>e</sup> tyme for their purpose to sinne in the village, fearing to be infamed or dishonored in the court, and yet beyng in the countrey liues w<sup>th</sup> shame forgettynge all reason. To exchue these thynges he that leaueth the Court ought to leaue his percialitie that he hath followed, & to forget all passions: otherwise he shal lamēt y<sup>e</sup> swete bitternes that he leues, & wepe the life that he hath begunne. This is true, that in the court are moze occasions geuen to destroy a mā, then are at home in his owne house to saue him.

It

The Courtiers life.

It is a small profite to y<sup>e</sup> courtier the chaūgynge of his dwelling, onles by thesame meanes he chaunge his condicions.

When the courtier sayth I wil withdrawe me to my countrey and go dyc at home, that is wel sayd: but this shall suffice that he honestly withdrawe himselfe, without determyng there dyc. This mortall life is to vs so prescript, that we ought not to pursue it with sorowe, but that we are bounde to amende it. When Job sayd Tedet animam meam vite mee, it was not for that his life worried him, but because he did not amende it.

Whosoever leaueth y<sup>e</sup> court may be bolde to say y<sup>e</sup> he goeth not to dyc: but may wel thinke  
D. b. he

**I Dispraise of**

he hath escaped from a fayre  
prison, from a confused life, frō  
a dangerous sickenes, from  
a suspicious conuersacion, frō  
a great sepulchre, & frō a mer=  
uail without ende. The wyldest  
beyng in y<sup>e</sup> court may say eue=  
ry day that they dye, & at their  
houses in the countrey that they  
liue. And the reason is: that be=  
yng in the court, those necessary  
thynges that are to be done in  
the worlde, cannot be done as  
they wold, nor when they wold,  
for lacke of libertie. Yet I will  
not say, but many in the court  
do their deuor to do as they  
would, but I dare affirme y<sup>e</sup> for  
x. pounde weight they haue of  
honest will, they haue not halfe  
an ounce of honest libertie.  
Likewise, let him that forsakes  
the



The Courtiers life.

the Court sette a wise ordze in  
suche busynes that he hath to  
do, calling to minde that to go  
home to his countrey nedes no  
lōg iorney, but to dispoyle him  
selfe of the euil clothes of the  
Court nedes a wonder long  
tyme. For like as vices increase  
in a man lytle and lytle, so is it  
mete to roote theim out by litle  
and litle. This ought y court-  
tier to do that myndes to rule  
himselke, plucke vppe by lytle  
pieces the most notable faultes  
that are in him, and so pretely  
dispatche himselke of one vice  
to day, & frō another to morow,  
in such sort that when one vice  
takes his leaue and is gone,  
straight way a vertue do entre  
in his steade, so y in proces he  
may go frō good to better. The  
courtier

**A Dispraisell of**

courtier is in nothing more deceiued then in liuyng a wilde & wanton life, peraduenture the space of .xx. or .xxx. yeres, thinketh in a yere or two to become sage & graue, as well as though he applied all his life in a sobre and sad life, & truely that happeneth for lacke of good iudgement, for it behoueth without comparifon a lenger tyme for to lerne to cast away vice, then to learne vertue: considering þ vices enter our gates laughyng and goeth out from our house wepyng & lamentyng. O how muche greueth it þ ambitious courtier, when he can not commaunde as he was wont to do: then it may be sayd, þ to forsake the court is requisite to a good heart, & a good witte to obtain rest.

Those

Those that leaue the Court  
for faine heart, be of that na-  
ture that it is moze painfull to  
thema to see theiueselues absent  
from the Court, then their ioye  
was when they wer in y<sup>e</sup> court:  
whiche sayd persons if they  
would folow myne adutce and  
counsel should not onely leaue  
the court, but forget it vtterly  
for euer. And farther, the cour-  
tier ought to retyze in suche  
maner that he may come to the  
Court againe, if the feare and  
study in orderyng of his hous-  
holde constraine him eftsones  
for to desire the voluptuousnes  
of the court. In the heart of  
the prudent courtier that forsa-  
keth the court, when there fal-  
leth bishoprickes or other great  
offices, the affecciōs & desires  
of



of the mynde ryngeth alarme,  
 when he shall thynke if I had  
 not come away so soone, that  
 office or that dignitie had been  
 myne: but he again remembryng  
 that many suche thinges hath  
 fallen which he had not: so like  
 wise might he haue in the stede  
 of ye, a plain nay, of that which  
 fell when he was gone. Then,  
 is it not muche better to ouerse  
 and trauaile his owne house  
 then to haue suche a shamefull  
 dental in the court?

Therfore destinies of y<sup>e</sup> cour-  
 tiers are so prompte and ready  
 that for the moste parte one is  
 constrained to dispise the more  
 by necessitie, then by wyl, and  
 in that meane while their pur-  
 pose is at an ende before they  
 themselves beware therof, for  
 when

When the Courtier commeth to  
be at a quiet to himselfe, aboue  
all thynges it is necessary that  
he take hede of pesteryng of  
himselfe, for if he did liue in the  
court euil willed, let him take  
hede that in the village he dis-  
paire not, by reason of charge,  
the importunitie of his wife, of  
his children, & the sautes of his  
seruautes, the grudgyng of  
his neighbours may parrase  
make him astonyed: but to  
thinke again, that beyng esca-  
ped from the dangerous golfe  
of the court, he may repute him  
selfe halfe a God. And besides  
this, none ought to thinke that  
he dwellyng in a village in the  
countrey shall putte awaye all  
troubles and displeasures, for  
it can not be, but he that neuer  
fell

fell in the croked & rough way  
 may happen to stumble in the  
 plaine way & breake his necke:  
 and therfore it is necessary that  
 he retiryng fro the court, take  
 the tyme as it shall come, that  
 he may the more occupie him  
 selfe in vertuous exercises, to p  
 entent that to much rest, and to  
 much busynes of minde let him  
 not from the great good that  
 commeth of this, to be well cō-  
 tented with a litle. Joyne vnto  
 this also that there is none so  
 muchē enemye vnto vertue as  
 is idlenes, of the which idlenes  
 be taken in the beginnyng  
 thoughtes superfluous, & cōse-  
 quently the distruccion of men.

To the purpose, hath not the  
 courtier cause to cōplaine, that  
 occupieth himselfe in nothyng  
 but



but in eatyng, Drinkyng, & Sleap-  
pyng, and in the meane season  
his better age, that is to say, his  
youth consumeth away, as the  
fume of smoke, which procedes  
of idlenes in the court & doyng  
nothyng: where contrarywyle  
he might in the village exercise  
himself to his honoz, and to the  
helth of his body and profite of  
his neighbour.

In like maner also, the cour-  
tier that withdrauweth himselfe  
shuld vse the company of suche  
as be graue, sage and honest, to  
the entent that in the stede of  
lyers, flatterers, & triflers whi-  
che he was associate withall in  
in the court, he may be accom-  
panied in the village with wise  
and sage frendes, oz at the har-  
dest with good bokes, whereby

e.i.

in

in the lokyng of theim he may  
vertuously imploze the residue  
of his tyme, and with sobrietie  
entertaine euery man, that men  
may saye he is come from the  
court to please the good, and  
not to rule. And if percase one  
would make him baylie in the  
village or other publique office  
I would counsaile him to take  
hede therof as he would of the  
pestilence, for because there is  
nothyng so troublesome nor so  
harde a burden to the mynde  
as to take charge of the rude &  
symple. I do not saye naye, but  
that he may and ought to help  
the poore commons of the vil-  
lage with suche knowlege as  
he hath lerned in y<sup>e</sup> court, or had  
before he came ther, when they  
shall haue nede, either for loue  
or

oz for money. Also if they be at  
variaunce, healpe to appeace  
thē: if they be euil intreated, De-  
fende them. And this doyng, he  
shalbe esteemed of the cōmons &  
praised of y<sup>e</sup> wise and prudent.  
Aboue all thynges beware of  
prodigal apparel, superfluous  
bāquetes, and delicate meates,  
and strong oz precious wyne.  
For the absenting frō the court  
ought to be to none other pur-  
pose but to liue soberly in the  
village, oz els shall he make of  
the village the court, whiche  
should make of the court, the  
village. And the courtier rety-  
red frō the court ought to haue  
in singuler cōmédacion mercy,  
as to visite hospytalles, succor  
the pooze, counsel the orphans,  
vysite the prysoners, reade the



A Dispraise of


holy scripture, and finally that  
he study to dispose his goodes  
vertuously durynge his life, for  
when he shalbe dead, euery mā  
wyl clayme his goodes, but  
none will or can discharge his  
solle. And moſte chiefly, let the  
courtier that goeth from the  
court occupie himſelfe vertu-  
ouſly to dye. All theſe thynges  
that I haue ſayd, let no mā ſay  
that they be moze eaſy to reade  
then to do: for if we wil enforce  
our ſelfes, we are moze then  
our ſelues, & do not then  
well remembre our  
ſelfes.

The

The Courtiers life.

The. v. Chapter.

That the rustical life is more  
quiet and restful and more bene-  
ficiall then that of the  
court.

 HE village whereof  
we speake and the de-  
maines therof, But  
we y<sup>e</sup> case that it were  
all free and not subiect to any  
lord(e) (as certain there be so pre-  
uiledged) that euery man there  
lyeth in his owne house, whe-  
ther it be by succession, or that  
he haue bought it freely with-  
out doying any homage or ser-  
uice to any man. This I dare  
say, the courtier hath not, nor is  
not in suche free libertie in re-  
specte of suche as be of the vil-  
lage, forasmuche as of very ne-  
cessitie, my maister the courtier  
e.iii. must

**A Dispraise of**

must wyn þe Marshal or Har-  
bégat of the lodging, and must  
receiue at his handes the billet  
to come to his lodgynge, & that  
late ynough & wery to his host,  
bʒeake opē dozes, beate doune  
walles, disorder houses, burne  
implementes and sometime bet  
the good man, & defile the wife.  
O how happye is he that hath  
wherewithall to liue in the vil-  
lage without troubleng bothe  
of himself & many sondry pla-  
ces, without seking of so many  
lodgynge, without assaues of  
so many straunge occasions of  
straunge men, without weping  
of any person, but is content  
with a meane estate, and is de-  
liuered of al suche bʒeakebʒat-  
nes. Another benefite of the  
countrey is this, that the gētle-  
man



man or burges that there doth  
inhabite maye be one of þ chief  
or chefest, either in bountie, ho-  
nor, or auctoritie, the whiche  
happeneth seldome in the court  
and in great cities and townes:  
for there he shal se other go be-  
fore him, more tryn and more  
braue and gorgeous then he, as  
well in credite as in riches, as  
wel in the house as without the  
house. And Iulius Cæsar sayd to  
this purpose that he had rather  
be the first in a village, then the  
second in honor in Rome. For  
suche men as haue high hartes  
and mindes, and base fortune,  
it should be to the muche better  
to liue in þ village with honor,  
then in the court ouerthrowen  
and abated, and out of fauor.  
The difference betwene the ta-  
r.iiii. rying

A Dispraise of

ryng or abiding in a litle place and a great place, is that in the litle places are founde muche people pooze and neddy, of whō men may take compassion: and in the great place many riche men wherby enuy is nozished.

Another commoditie in the village is, that euery man enioyeth in quiet and peace suche as God hath geuen him, without to haue suche to come to their houses, that shal cōstraine theim to make extraoꝝdinary expenses, or to haue his wife seduced, or his daughters defiled. The occasiōs to do euil be put away by reason that he is occupied in the mainteinyng of his houlholde, in trainyng of his daughters, in teachyng of his sonnes and chastenyng of his seruauntes

seruauntes. He liueth confirmed to reason and not to his opinion: and liues hoppyng to dye & not as he that loueth to liue euer. In the village, thou shalt not care for good lodgynge, nor for lookynge to thy Horses and Mules, nor for the lading of suche thinges as they shall carry. Thou shalt not heere the crying of pages, the plaintes of the stuardes of the house, the babling of the Cookes, nor thou shalt not feare neither Judges nor Iustices lest they should be to sore against the. And that whiche is muche better, thou shalt haue no craftie knaues to beguile the, nor women to betray the.

Another benefite of the village is this, that he shall haue  
tyme



### **I Disparasse of**

tyne enough to al thinges that  
he will do, so that the tyne be  
well spent, tyne enough to stu-  
dy, tyne to visite his frendes,  
tyne to go a huntynge, and lay-  
ser when he list to eat his meat:  
the whiche layser courtiers cō-  
monly hath not, forasmuche as  
they employe the moste part of  
their tyne in making of shiftes  
to play & courtier, or to speake  
more plainely, to wepe and la-  
ment, in suche sorte & one may  
say of the that whiche the Em-  
perour Augustus sayd of a Ro-  
man a great busie broker the  
same day that he dyed. I won-  
der sayd he, seyng the tyne fai-  
led him to chop and to chaunge,  
how he could now fynde layser  
to dye: Another commoditie of  
the village is this, those that  
be

The Courtiers life.

be dwellers there may go alone  
from place to place without to  
be noted to fall from grauitie,  
they nede no Mule nor Horse  
with afoote clothe, nor page to  
waite of my lord, or damosell  
to waite vpon my lady. And  
that were scorneful to do in the  
court alone: And without daū-  
ger one may walke frō neigh-  
bor to neighbor, and from land  
to land, and not therby minish  
any part of his honoz.

Another benefite is, that men  
may go whether they will, clo-  
thed simply with a staffe in his  
hande, a swearde by his side, or  
hacbut in his necke, and if he  
be wery of pounsed hosen, lette  
him wear shoppes, if he be a  
colde lette him take his furred  
goune for all is one there. A  
good

A Dispraise of

good Gentleman dwelling in  
the village and hauyng a good  
cote of clothe, an honest Spa-  
nish cloke on his backe, a  
paire of lether shooes, goeth as  
wel trynned to the churche as  
doeth my lord the courtier to  
the court with his goun furde  
with Marters or Sables. A  
man of the village of what sort  
soeuer he be, is in as good case,  
that rydeth to market, or to the  
faier to make prouision for his  
housholde vpon a mare or a  
nagge, as a lord of the courte  
is at Justes vpon a great cour-  
ser trapped with golde. And  
(when all is sayd) better is the  
poore ploughman on a poore  
asse, liuyng as he should, then  
the riche man well horsed, pil-  
lyng & doyng extorcion to poore  
honest men.



The. vi. Chapiter.

That in the village the dayes  
seme more long and the ayer more  
clere and better. And the houses  
more easy and testfull.



Asuyng styll the cō-  
modities of the vil-  
lage, we ought not to  
forget that he whiche  
dwelles there, among other  
thynges hath commoditie of  
good corne, and consequently  
good breade: contrary to this,  
in the court, & specially in great  
tounes they haue bread for the  
moste parte euil baked or euil  
leuened or not leuened at all, &  
the cause is, forasmuche as in  
the tounes often there lacketh  
good corne, or good corne mil-  
les to grindethe corne, and hol-  
some water, wherby often hath  
come

come amōg them great death.

Another commoditie in the  
village is this, the whiche I  
praise muche, he that dwelles  
there, may practise and labour  
in mod thynges and better im-  
ploy the tyme then in the court  
or in y great tounes: in whiche  
places it behoueth a mā to dis-  
semble, to say litle, ful of reuen-  
gynge and enuyous, a tredet of  
stones and pauemētes, & must  
use grauitie, & seldome to come  
out of his house, and incessant-  
ly be graue. O halfe a God, that  
dwelles in the village, where  
libetally one may speake what  
he will and iest with his neigh-  
bours befoze his gates and his  
wyndowe. And this may he do  
without euer to chaunge or to  
lese any of his mean auctoritie

Another.

**The Courtiers life.**

Another comoditie is in the  
village, that those that dwell  
ther, be wout comparison moze  
helthfull and lesse sicke then in  
the cities and in the courte, be-  
cause in the great tounes the  
houses be moze higher, and the  
stretes narrower, and moze cro-  
ked, whiche is the cause that the  
ayze is corrupt and makes mē  
very euil at ease. In y<sup>e</sup> village  
the houses stand moze at large  
the men moze better disposed,  
the ayze better, the sunne moze  
clere, the yearth moze swete, the  
private goodes oz cōmons bet-  
ter ruled without contencion, &  
the exercise moze pleasant, and  
the company much better: And  
aboue all thinges the though-  
tes lesset, and the pastyme moze  
great.

Another



Another commoditie in the  
village is, that ther are no yōg  
Physicians, nor olde sicknes:  
And contrary to this, the cour-  
tier is constrained there to part  
his goodes in fower partes, the  
one part to flatterers, y other to  
men of lawe, another to potte-  
caries, & the fowerth to y Physi-  
cians. O well fortunate vil-  
lage, forasmuche as in the, sel-  
dome or neuer is the frenche  
pockes named, neither the pau-  
sy not yet y goutte: fewe or none  
there knoweth what is a Julep,  
a Pyll, a Sirup, or a Thysan,  
nor no sodain sickenes. What  
will ye that I shall say moze of  
the village? And if it were not,  
but that for necessitie, they are  
compelled to builde there litle  
pretie houses, ye should scant  
finde

fynde one of theim that knewe  
what to do with mortar & stoo-  
nes: And sometyme they are  
very well pleased with cabons  
made of small stickees well fa-  
stened together.

Another commoditie of the  
village is, that the daies there  
seme to be moze long, and they  
are better imployed, then they  
are either in the court or in the  
great townes, forasmuch as the  
yeres passe awaye there or one  
be wate, and the daies without  
any enoysng of them. And how  
beit that the sportes and plea-  
sures be moze in the village  
then in the townes, yet so it is  
that one day shall seme lenger  
there then shal a moneth in the  
court: & the reason is, for that  
the village is happye and for-  
f.i. tunate

A Dispraisall of

fortunate, forasmuche as there the Sunne seemes to make a more longer day, the mornynge is ready to shew, and the night slow to come. Scarcely one can perceiue the dayes flyde away in the court: In the village if it be perceived, it is bestowed with honest busynes, whiche cannot be done in the court.

In the village also is much more plentie of wood then in other places: hay, strawe, Otes much better chepe then in good townes. Also in the village a man is at libertie to eat his meate where he will, & when he will & with whō he will: but in the court they eat late, the meat euil dressed and colde, and without sauour, and that whiche is worst



Worst of al, for the most parte;  
he must eate with his enemies,  
where as the good felowes of  
the village liueth at their plea-  
sures and without suspicion,  
keping their thre good fashions  
that belongeth to good repast,  
that is, first he eneth his meat  
next that he eateth his meate  
merely, & thirdly he eateth with  
good company.

Another commoditie is that  
the husbandman of the village  
hath how to occupy themselves  
and howe to be mery, whiche  
the courtier, nor the citezen  
hath not, that hath enemies e-  
nough to feare, and fewe fren-  
des to company withall. O re-  
creation pleasaunt of the vil-  
lage, to fishe with nettes, and  
with hokes, to catche birdes w  
f.ii. lyme

A Dispraise of

lyme, to hunte with dogges, to  
catche Conies with ferrcites, &  
hayes, to shote in the crosbowe  
and the hacbut at stokdoues,  
at Mallardes & at pattryges:  
and se folkes labor in þ vynes,  
raise diches, amende hedgcs,  
to test with þ aũcient laborers,  
All these pleasures haue they  
of the villages, wheras the  
courtiers and citezens De-  
sire it & cānot haue it.

The. vii. Chapiter.

¶ That commonly the inhabi-  
tauntes of the villages be more  
happy then courtiers.



Another commoditie of  
the village is, that thei  
do fele þ trauailes lesse  
on the workyng day, & reioyce  
merely on the holy day: where  
the

The Courtiers life.

the courtier continually vexed  
with weightie and troublesome  
affaires, neuer knoweth when it  
is holy day. In village, it is not  
so in the, wheras on the feastful  
daye the clerke ceaseth not to  
tolle the bell, to make cleane the  
chutche, to make redy y<sup>e</sup> alters,  
the people honestly appatelled  
the feastes commaunded to be  
obserued, the curate preacheth y<sup>e</sup>  
gospel, & after diner they make  
mery with a thousande honest  
pastymes. In the great tounes  
the holydaies are knowen when  
the wyfes goe gape, when they  
sleepe long in the moorning, whē  
thei play after diner: and gene-  
rally when they consume the  
day in voluptuousnes and va-  
nities.

Another commoditie is this,  
f.iii. that



**I Dispraise of**

that where the courtiers vse to  
eate fleshe and corrupt venison  
& wildefoule that is long kept,  
they of the village haue their  
meate freshe and freshe, tender  
and holsome, & as one may say,  
in good seasō: that is, housdo-  
ues, Partridge, pullettes, stock-  
doves, wodcockes, Fesauntes,  
fatte Capons, Conyes, Hares,  
and innumerable victayl of al  
sortes. And ouer and besydes  
this, to their great aduauntage  
they haue shepe that beareth  
woll to clothe them, good mut-  
ton to eate, dong to make fatte  
their ground, and kyddes and  
Goates also, with Oxen to la-  
bor in the plough, and kyne to  
milke and make butter & chese:  
and hogges to make bacon of,  
Coltes for to nourishe & horses  
for

for to serue them and for to sell  
when neede requiteth. And an-  
other priuelege of the village  
is this, that the good shall be  
honoured for a good man, and  
the vnchristie person known  
as he is, whiche is not so in the  
court, for ther is nomā praised  
for that he deserueth to be prai-  
sed, but because he hath aucto-  
ritie and riches.

How much is the wise mā  
honored in the village for his  
wysedome and good counsaile:  
how many tymes is he thāked  
and how many presentes hath  
he? If parcase one of his neigh-  
bors haue any goodfruit in his  
garden, a good melon, a good  
pear, or a good muscadel grape  
gladly they wyl present him  
therewith, as to him that  
f.iiii. hath

hath deserued it.

Another pzeuilege of the vil-  
lage is this, that euery mā may  
marry his Daughters to his e-  
qualles and neighbours, that  
thereby Dayly he may receiue  
bothe pleasure and seruice, the  
whiche the courtiers cannot do  
that marry their Doughters so  
farre frō them, that for y most  
part they lament them oz they  
see them. O happy inhabitoz  
in y village that fyndes at his  
gate husbandes for his dought-  
ters, and wiucs for his sonnes.  
He marryeth them nigh to him  
that he may easily see his sōnes  
in lawe, his litle nephues & his  
posteritie: he is beloued of thē,  
succoured in his affaires, ser-  
ued & nourished in his sickenes,  
and great cōforte to him in his  
age.

Another



Another commoditie is, that they are not to muche carefull nor yet ireful or enuious: whiche commoditie they of y<sup>e</sup> court and the citezens litle tasteth or enioyeth: for the courtier many times lacketh money, when his great affaires shuld be brought to passe. I say therfore o happy mā of y<sup>e</sup> village, that nedes not to go at ten of the clocke to the palice to beg counsel, to speake fayre to y<sup>e</sup> vscher, to waite vpon the president & make flectamus ienua to the lawyer, and flatter the kyng and his counsel, & the Magistrate: but hath in stede of these Idolatries for a happy solace, the benefites of nature and y<sup>e</sup> pastimes therof, to heare the shepe blete, the Bulles to Bray, the Horse to nese, the

f. v.      tyngales

**A Dispraise of**

tyngales to syng, þ Thrusches  
to warble, the Lynets to mynse  
their songes, Dogges to runne,  
Lambes to leape, Kyddes to  
gambolde, & see the Pekockes  
set vp their tailes like a whele,  
Hēnesto kecle, kockes to crow,  
& a thousand kynde of beastes  
and birdes play and sporte.

Another commoditie is, that  
in the village one may be there  
more vertuous & lesse vicious  
then in the court oz in the great  
citiees, and þ reason is, for that  
in great companyes we shall  
cōmenly fynde a M. that kepe  
men from good doyng & x. M.  
that will moue vs to do euill.  
And in the village euery man  
sanctifyeth the Sabboth day,  
kepeth the feastes, heareth the  
sermones, and by this meanes  
with

**The Courtiers life.**

With great labor worketh his  
soule health assisted by grace.

Wherfore the village is to be  
praised for that y<sup>e</sup> occasions of  
euil, and of our destruction are  
not so plentifull and practised  
there, as they are in the court &  
in good townes, no cokes hou-  
ses to make them licorous: nor  
there are no great estates wher  
by enuy shuld arise: there is no  
chopping nor chaungyng by  
vsury: whores to quarell and  
fight for, nor courtiers to tor-  
ney in armure, nor wanton and  
lewde places to corrupt youth  
withall: nor Iustices to feare  
them, ye (and that best of all is)  
no couetuousnes whiche shuld  
swalow vp and deuoure them.

Another p<sup>re</sup>uilege there is,  
that there one may well gather  
some



A Dispraise of

some good, and spende much  
lesse then in the court. For eue-  
ry man knowes well what ex-  
cessiue expēces are accustomed  
to be wasted in the court, & spe-  
cially in these dayes, that the  
great apparelling of bākettes  
is suche that they be well woꝝ-  
thy to be reformed. O peacea-  
ble peysaūtes which needes not  
the tapettes of Flaunders, lin-  
nyng clothe of Holland, silver  
plate, garmentes imbꝛodered,  
Parcement lace puttilde, noꝝ  
yet cariage, Mullettes, varlet-  
tes to conduct them, noꝝ other  
superfluous attyze: but contra-  
ry in stede of that, is contented  
w a lytle household well ruled,  
with a grosse table and a fewe  
plaine stoles to eate his meate  
vpon, with dishes of Deuter &  
a mattres

The Courtiers life.

a mattres for to slepe on, two  
gounes, one for sōmer, another  
for wynter, one geldyng in the  
stable, one varlet, one chambe-  
ter to do him seruiice: As muche  
happy is a gentleman and as  
muche honored with his lytle  
companye in his house in the  
village, as is a riche lord in the  
court with his great pryde, and  
tuffyng traine.

The. viii. Chapiter

That in princes courttes the  
custome and vse is to speake  
of God and liue after  
the worlde.

**I**n the Court, euen  
as there is no rigo-  
rous iustice, no fa-  
ther that chastiseth  
his soonne, no frende that cor-  
recteth one the other, none that  
loueth

**A Dispraise of**

loueth his neighboꝝ, no bishop  
noꝝ curate that gouerneth well  
his shepe noꝝ teacheth them af-  
ter the gospel: So he that is  
by nature good, hath great li-  
bertie to be naught. In the  
court if one wil be an adulterer,  
he shall haue felowes. If he  
wil be a quareller, he shall haue  
helpe, & that with suche as will  
drawe their swordes. If he be  
disposed to banquetynge, euery  
where he shall fynde gluttons,  
If he will manifestly & shame-  
fully lye, he shall fynde compa-  
nions ready that will approue  
his lies: If he wil steale, he shall  
fynde them that will instructe  
him many wayes thereto: If he  
will play, there is so many car-  
des and so many dise, that it is  
shame to see it: If one will be  
falsely



**The Courtiers life.**

falsely forsworne, he shal fynde  
theim that will geue money for  
forswearng: fynally, if he wil  
btterly geue himself to do euil,  
in the court he shall see perfecte  
examples. To the court resoz-  
teth menne of diuers nacions,  
some for busines, some to plede  
or to serue or to shewe theim  
selues, whiche persons to bring  
themselves acquainted are for-  
ced to folowe the seruauntes of  
suche as be in auctozitie, to flat-  
ter them, & speake fayze to the:  
and to folowe the companies &  
fellowship of the taberers, the  
Pyppers, the Musycians, the  
flatterers and mery iesters, and  
at y ende become God knowes  
pooze and nedý gentlemen, in  
suche wise that by very necessi-  
tie thei be cōpelled to demaūde  
rewardes

**A Disprasse of**

rewardes, newyeres giftes and new apparell. And yet to this euil felowes, they whiche geue buto theim any good thyng, geue it rather to get themselves a name to be called ful of magnificence then for any charitie at all.

In the Court, fortune is inconstant, in that she promiseth, and yet more in that which she geueth, for at one instant, wher one ryseth, another falleth, one is bozne, another dyeth: he is auanced that is vnknownen, & the faythful seruaunt forgotten, he that will abyde is not recciued, but he that will runne away is taken in: fooles are beleued and wisemen belyed, opinions be folowed and reason let passe. With these thinges  
and

and other semblable thynges  
that we assay and se in courtes  
of princes, cuery manne may  
bee assured that fortune will  
knocke at hisdooze, though for  
the moste parte the Courtiers  
find soner their graue then any  
good fortune, & specially suche  
that vnder colour to be disceñ-  
ded of a good house, go to the  
court to bragge, and yet neuer-  
thelesse are so folishe and igno-  
raunt, that it may be sayd they  
are moze mete for the cart then  
for the spere, so that they serue  
in conclusion to be a daliance  
to the mockers & iesters. And  
one great mischiefe is in the  
court, that there is euer hatred  
amonges the princes, enuye a-  
mong familiars, contencion a-  
mong officers and with their  
G.i. felowes



felowes . And among these  
there neuer lacketh medlers &  
busye bodyes , whiche profite  
more thereby , then some doctor  
of diuinitie doeth by prechynge .  
In the court all is suffered , all  
is dissembled withall , all is in-  
constant , and all sortes desyre  
there to liue : and forasmuche  
as al suche desire there to liue ,  
it is impossible but there must  
be lyers , playets , flaunderers ,  
and a great number of naugh-  
tie persons .

In the court the euil folow-  
eth the euil : The brauler syn-  
des one to braule withall ; The  
adulterer one that he may sinne  
withall : The these a compani-  
on & receiuer : The sophister a  
babler : & all rekened together ,  
one ready to deceiue another ,

In

In þe court every mā praiseth  
& commendeth himselfe of holp  
purposes and noble though-  
tes. One sayeth he will with-  
drawe himself from the court.  
And another sayeth he wil for-  
get his suites. Another sayeth  
he will quenche enemie. And  
when they haue all sayd, all is  
but wordes, for the heart thin-  
keth of nothyng els but of the  
world. None knoweth there the  
one the other: The men of ar-  
mes go without harmys: The  
prelates without their rotchet-  
tes: The priest without his por-  
teaus: The daughter without  
her mother: The wife without  
her husband: The clerke with-  
out his bokes: The these with-  
out a spyre: The glutton from  
g.ii. table

table to table. The vacabonde  
frō place to place, and y baude  
from dooze to dooze, and from  
harlot to harlot. In the court  
there be bishoppes to cōfirme  
curates, to baptise & chaunge  
names: For he that is glorious  
gay, ther name him honorable,  
he that spendes all, full of mag-  
nificence, the coward wise, the  
valiaunt ouerhardye, the foole  
iopous, the wyse an hypocrite,  
the malicious subtle, the scoffer  
eloquent, the adulteret Amo-  
rous, the coueteous inesura-  
ble, and he that talketh li-  
tle, a foole and an ig-  
nozaunt person.

The



The. ix. Chapiter.

In the court fewe amende,  
but many waxe worse.

**I**n the court it profits litle, menne to be wise, onlesse they be fortunate, forasmuche as good seruice is sone forgotten: frendes sone faileth and enemies augment, the nobilitie doeth forget it selfe, science is forgotten, humilitie dispised, trueth cloked & hid, and good counsell refused. The beste mine and the richest Alcumet that the Courtier may haue, is to haue wynde at will to sayle with, that is, to be in fauour with them that be fauoured, till fortune laugh vpon him: for the condicions and fashions of eng.iii. tretain=

**A Dispraise of**

retainment chaungeth dayly  
and hourly. To proue this  
true, Plato needes not to  
speake, nor Cicero to sweare,  
forasmuche as afore our eyes  
we see the foole become wyse,  
the meke, become proude, the  
sobze a glutton, the pacient a  
brauler, and the deuout an euil  
christian man.

In the court it is a great bu=  
synes and trauaile for to fynde  
bertue, and greater daungier &  
peril to kepe it. Is not humili=  
tie lost among them that be in  
honor, or paciēce among wzōg  
doers, or abstinence among  
gluttons, or chastitie amonges  
women, or rest amonges busy=  
nes, or charitie amonges euil  
willers, or peace amōges sedi=  
cious, or silence amongest bab=  
lers

lers, or good witte whereis so  
muche folly : In the court no  
man is content, euey man cō=  
plaineth either because y<sup>e</sup> kyng  
geueth him nought, or because  
the prince healpeth him not, or  
that one or other is euer be=  
twixt him and home : He com=  
plaines of the porter he wil not  
let him in: of the treasurer that  
he payeth him not : of his cre=  
diture whiche taketh away his  
goodes : or of one or other that  
that doeth him wrong in the  
court. If one rede a letter of  
pleasure, he shal reade an hun=  
dred of displeasure. The wife  
shall write to her husband and  
praye him for to come home, y<sup>e</sup>  
he may marry his daughters  
beyng of age, or y<sup>e</sup> his children  
be disobedient, that his frendes  
hath forsaken him, and that by  
g.iiii. ingra=



ingratitude thei render euil for good, and wcrines doth assayle her on al sides, that her tenants cal her to the lawe, that his goodes be spent: surely he shal heare suche newes, so that for two grotes that he geueth to the bearer of þ letters, he wold gladly haue geue more to haue hard no suche newes

In the court a manne doeth many thinges by necessitie, that to vye for it he would not do in his house: he dynes and suppes with his enemies, he speakes with him that he neuer knewe nor pleaseeth him not, defendeth him that helpes him not, coloweth him that honoureth not him, lendes to him that payeth him not, dissembles with him that doeth him iniury, and trustes to him that beguiles him.

**O vnhappy**

**O** vnhappy & sorowfull courtier if by chaunce he growe to be a poore man, no man will succour him, and if he fall sicke no man visites him, and if he dye he is incōtinent forgotten: if he be vertuous no man commendes him, and if he be out of credit no man regards him. In the court there is nothyng more rare nor more deare to recover then vertue, nor more easy to fynde then the aboundaūce of thze maner of people. That is of tale bzingers, of flatterers and of lyars. The lyers deceiueth y pprinces. The flatterers the riche menne. The tale bzingers, those that be in fauour. The women, deceiueth the mē. The coucteousnes, y olde men. The pompe the prelates. The auaricious, the priestes. The

g. v.      liberte

A Dispraise of,

libertie y<sup>e</sup> religious, ambition,  
the presumptuous, y<sup>e</sup> wise cōfi-  
dēce in men, & al they ioyned to  
gether be deceiued by fortune.  
In the court men employe the  
tyme so euil that from the tyme  
the courtier doeth arise, tyl he  
go to bed, he occupieth him self  
aboute nothing but in askyng  
of newes, iettyng aboute the  
stretes, write letters, speake of  
the warres, entertein them that  
be in fauor, counsell with bau-  
des, make as he were in loue  
and lese alwayes the tyme. In  
the court moze then in any o-  
ther place the thinges are slow.  
For one rises late, and worst of  
all amendes his life late. All  
thynges there is variable and  
chaungeable and inconstaunt.  
The estates chaunge, The litle  
assende, the great fall. The  
widowes



**The Courtiers life.**

widowes there be marde: The  
married be detained: The may=  
dens be shamed: The good spi=  
rites be dulled: The valiaunt  
becommes cowardes: The pre=  
lates waxe worse & worse: The  
sciēces are forgotten: The yōg  
leese their tyme: The olde vn=  
done: This is y<sup>e</sup> courtiers life.  
He is not worthy to be a cour=  
tier onlesse he be in debte and  
oweth to the Draper for clothe,  
to the Werser for silke, to the  
taylor for the makynge of his  
apparell, to the goldsmyth for  
iewels for my lordes y<sup>e</sup> courtiers  
lady, to the Judges for the dis=  
putynge of proceses, to the ser=  
uauntes for wages, to their ho=  
stes for their spence. There is  
to muche euill counsaill euen  
suche as is more then the halfe  
way ledyng to damnacion.

**The**

A Dispraise of

The .x. Chapter.

That a man cannot live in the court, without to trouble him selfe or some other.



Courtier doeth many thinges, moze for to say. I do as other men do, then for any neede he hath so to do. He banquettes with euery man because he will not be called an hypocrite, Playes because he would not be named a niggard, & companyes with many, because he wil not be named a solitary mā and geues to rascall & naughty persons because he would not be euil sayd of them. A mā in y<sup>e</sup> court is full of persiuenes and passions: For it is trueth that it is appropried to them of nature that folowes y<sup>e</sup> court,  
to

to be incessantly tormented. He  
muste praise his felowes, dis-  
praise straungers, & loke vnto  
them that do well, and blame  
them that do euil, and spend at  
large with his felowes, and a-  
gainst his enemyes spare not his  
owne proper life: And all this  
must he do because he will not  
be dispraised. In the court co-  
monly one professeth to wayte  
of one maister, but for all that  
he must serue at the taile of dy-  
uers other lordes. O broken  
heart of the poore courtier that  
must nedes serue suche as know-  
weth him not, and make reue-  
rence to them that deserue not  
to haue it, and must saye to my  
maister the officet an hundredth  
tymes a day, sir and if it please  
you. And he shall answere  
when



**A Dispraise of**

when I am at leysse: tarp a  
whyle at the doore. And yet we  
must call him maister that de-  
serues it no moze then the hāg  
man that strangles a man with  
a halter. O what pitie is it to se  
a pooze suiter in his neddy bu-  
synes folowe the kyng from  
toun to toun euil nozished &  
worse lodged: The kyng hath  
busynes, the counselet is defe,  
the Almoner hath no hande, &  
he that thou knowest hath no  
eyes: And without money and  
extreme pain, the fiue wittes of  
nature be laine.

In the court, albeit that one  
hath no enemies whiche is sel-  
dome seene, yet is it trueth that  
many tymes his owne frendes  
putte him out of quiet, foras-  
muche as if the courtier will  
take

The Courtiers life.

take rest in his lodgyng, they  
grunt at him because he wyl  
not go see his frendes and pro-  
voke him to go folowe y<sup>e</sup> prin-  
ces in the court, sayng, that  
the rascall and the varlettes  
mocke at him, that he goeth not  
thether and shewe himselfe free  
and liberal: and when he is a-  
riued at the court, whiche is a  
naturall enemye to rest, and a  
desire of nouelles, then must he  
chaunge, as doeth the Egipci-  
an, whiche euery day seketh a  
newe countrey, a new lodging,  
newe apparell and conuersa-  
tions, busynes and fashions  
of menne. To my frende and  
the reader of this: This is the  
life of the courtier as it is hete  
discribed: and also of him that  
liueth

A Dispraise of

liueth in the village thewhiche  
sayd life of the peysauntes shal  
be muche praised of many, and  
chosen of a fewe, because that  
euery man readeth booke en-  
ough & the more he readeth &  
lesse he chaungeth of his euil  
customes. And to cal to reason  
why it is so, it foloweth that the  
court of prices is good but for  
two maner of menne, for them  
that be in fauor, & for the yong  
whiche be yet of a weake iudge-  
ment. And those that be in fa-  
uor, & doeth waite dayly, se the  
selues so riche, so feared, and so  
wel accompanied that thei fele  
not the paine of the court. And  
the pleasure they gette thereby  
makes them for cōclusion for  
get themselves, yet notwithsta-  
nding for all this, it is impossi-  
ble



ble but that their bzaines must  
 be troubled, because they be to  
 much occupied, for their houses  
 are to ful of people, their eares  
 full of lyes, their tounge to  
 much troubled w<sup>th</sup> answering of  
 euery mā, their heartes to much  
 pressed to ayde and helpe them  
 that they would helpe, & other.  
 And finally y<sup>e</sup> greater in aucto-  
 ritie & credite they be, ye shal se  
 them y<sup>e</sup> more pensiue & the more  
 astonyed, and for the most part  
 sooner complaine then reioyce:  
 but cōmaunde who cōmaunde  
 will, haue credite who will, the  
 truth is, none can take pleasure  
 of his goodes, wout honest rest  
 Beside this those which be sayd  
 to be in fauor, are euer in feare  
 to be put doune frō their aucto-  
 ritie: And by that meanes are  
 h.i. in

In cōtinual dzedde and tozment,  
the whiche is an enemy mortal  
to quiet and rest. And the yong  
in like case (as I haue sayd) y  
be without iudgement & blyn=  
ded in vices, do not knowe nor  
see the incōmodities of y court,  
nor care, neither for fauor nor  
honor, but bounden & drounde  
in voluptuousnes and vices,  
passe the better parte of their  
daies in the schoole that is no=  
thing worth, vnder the maister  
of pardicion.

The.xi. Chapiter.

¶ That in the court those that be  
graue are praised and well esteemed,  
and the other that doeth the  
contrary not regarded.



The courtier shuld not  
acquaint himself with  
vaine and ydle per=  
sons, that he be not re=  
puted

puted to be suche as he compa-  
nieth withall. For it had not  
been enough for him to saye he  
must nedes do there as other do  
and dissemble as other dissem-  
bles. Neither behoueth it him  
not to cloke his naughtie do-  
yng, in goyng secretely to suche  
as be naught, for why? the  
wittes of the courtiers are so  
fine, that they knowe not onely  
what one sayeth but what he  
thinketh. There is neither litle  
nor great but menne spye him  
whether he goeth, from whence  
he cometh, & where he abideth,  
with whom he talketh, in who  
he trusteth, and what he wil do,  
so wel, that y curtens may hide  
a person, but to hide y vices of  
the courters is impossible. The  
courtier also ought not to brag  
and crake that thynges shalbe



A Dispraise of

as he would, he may not presume to speake to the kyng and require audience as he himself lust: for he y<sup>e</sup> foloweth the court muste be as one that hath no mouth to speake, nor hañdes to be auenged withal, beyng well assured that there is no more loue in the court, then are clothes vpon a bare horse. For he that is in the court, and is not armed w<sup>th</sup> patience, it had been muche better for him not to haue come out of his countrey, for beyng a quareller & sedicious fellow, in y<sup>e</sup> court he shalbe hated, and paraduētūre banished frō thēce, & then his returning shalbe to his vtter shame.

Malice & displeasures take often an end in the village, but in y<sup>e</sup> court is alwayes an ouerplus

plus of them. What is the cause? Fortune I say of her, whiche hath the rule ouer them who counteth for a goddesse, whiche is moze feared of a foolish opinion, then for any power she hath ouer men.

The courtier also ought not to condescende to that whiche his sensualitie requireth, but to that whiche reason doeth persuaue him vnto, forasmuche as y<sup>e</sup> one demaundes moze then nedes, & the other contentes him w<sup>th</sup> lesse then he hath. Forasmuche then as in the court, ther is so many tables to glutton on, so many newe founde playes to play at, so many quarelles to fight for, so many matters to pleade, there is no cause to meruaile if the sage be cherished, and the  
h.iii. Dissolute

A Dispraise of

dissolute person blamed. The good mā within y<sup>e</sup> court, is as a nutte within the shale, & a maye within y<sup>e</sup> bone, & a perle within the cokle, and a rose among the thornes. I do not say reder, for the qualitie and quātitie of the malice of the court, that all be vicious that be ther: God forbid that it so shuld be, but whē I call to remembraunce we be all mortall men, I thynke it in maner impossible to arriue safe into the porte, among so many Syllas and Caribdes. Ye will say that the wily and the subtile person there waxeth riche, and that the great sūmes of money be there: I cōfesse it, & I would say your sayng shuld be good if they y<sup>e</sup> were of the best knowledge & the most vertuous number



ber wer auauunced for their vni-  
dence, as the other be by hazard  
and chaunce or by theft, for the  
reward of vertue, is not like to  
the rewarde of fortune.

Item the courtier ought not to  
geue presētes, nor lightly take,  
for why? for to geue him that  
deserues it not, there lackes  
wysedome. And to receiue of  
him that one ought not, is a  
thyng but vile.

Who that will exercise libera-  
litie, ought to considre what he  
geueth, and to whō he geueth:  
for it shuld be but folly to geue  
that whiche one may not, & that  
whiche he himselfe nedes. And  
one ought to considre the tyme  
and the end and the season, and  
wherfore he geueth. And if the

A Disprasse of

courtier geue somethyng ouer  
liberalitie & without iust cause  
of recompense of him whiche is  
out of credite and in the tyme  
that he beginneth to declyne.

Is not then the gifte euil im=  
ployed? is it not to be lameted  
that one geues soner to y flat=  
terer to tel some feined oz liyng  
tales, oz to a iester to make the  
laugh, oz to a common lyer to  
make them talke, oz to a plea=  
saunt felow to inuent a lye, ra=  
ther then to a trustie seruaunt  
that hath all y daies of his life  
deserued to haue thake for his  
good seruice? Yet for all this,  
myne entencion is not to per=  
suade great me that they shuld  
not geue to all men: but I say  
the true seruautes ough. to be  
preferred, because it is more  
meter

meter that their seruice should be rewarded, then the presentes of straungers considered.

When a mā geueth to straungers, the seruauntes seying the same drawe backe: ye may be assured that they not only murmur at that whiche is geuen, but also accuse him of his vngentle dede, and become a mortal enemy to him that the thing is geuen vnto. The giftes makes a man muche subiecte that receiueth the, for as sone as any man doeth take of another an horse or a gowne, or often sitte with him at his table, he bindes himselfe therby to beare him fauour, to defende his quarel, to kepe him company, to take his parte, and to loue that that he loueth. And reason wil, that si-

h.b.

thens



A Dispraise of

thens one feleth profite of ano-  
ther that he be not unkynde,  
howbeit let a manne bewate to  
bind himself so muche vnder y  
wil of other men, that he therby  
forgetteth his owne honestie.  
Many yong childre descended  
of an honest house go to y court  
& take with them a good parte  
of their goodes and consume  
thesame plaiyng, eatyng, and  
drinkyng, and blyng baudy &  
adultery vnder colour of lear-  
nyng their behauior: and re-  
sorte to the great mennes hou-  
ses, to no other intent, but to be  
much made of of the wher they  
take a great repast, and after-  
ward so play the yong wanton  
fooles, that they spende rent,  
honor and all. And when the  
purse is flat, their office is to go  
al

The Courtiers life.

all the day in the stretes to the  
chutches and to the palaice to  
aske newes & tidynge, on-  
ly to pype out lyes and fables  
at the lordes boordes, & all for  
to go scot fre. And ther is a sort  
of yong men in the court, yea I  
may say to you, of those y<sup>e</sup> haue  
beardes, that neither haue ma-  
ster nor entertainers, that as  
soone as a straunger cometh  
to the court, straight waies thei  
boorde him, sayng that they  
wyl shewe him the fashions &  
maners of the court, the plea-  
sures of the palaices, the ma-  
ner how to kepe him from de-  
ceiptfull felowes, and to enter-  
taine yong gentlewomen. And  
thus y<sup>e</sup> newccome courtier that  
is yet a foole, in the meane sea-  
son shalbe hadled in suche wise  
that

A Dispraise of

that now goeth a goun, now a  
coate, another tyme a horse, &  
sometyme purse and all. And  
there is another sorte of men in  
the court that busieth themselves  
with so great auctoritie & with  
so litle wit, that after they haue  
vled & company of some great  
lorde, they wil send him a lettre  
by their page, saiyng they be  
poore gentlemen, kynsfolke to  
some great men, and that they  
be there suynge for some office,  
and that they haue a payment  
in hand, wherfore they require  
him to lende him a certain sum  
of money: And yet are they in  
no suche necessitie, but onely to  
get somewhat, either to buye a  
gay coate, or a horse, or to kepe  
a whore.

There is another sort of false  
and



A beggerly courtiers, the which after they be ones vled to the court, they go from church to church to alke for Gods sake, sayng they be pooze suiters & that thei loue better to begge then to robbe, commending the selfe to the priestes to begge for them on the pooze parisheners when they preache, & so take against reason the good & pooze men should haue.

There is another sorte of haunters in the court, that goe from one house to another of y great estates and lordes, counterfaytyng to be diligent seruautes, flatterynge y steward, the butler, and the cooke, & liue of that whiche is lefte of the diners, and goe their waies with their pockettes and their sleues full

A Dispraise of

full of meate for to suppe with  
all. And ther is another maner  
of sorte that go two and two &  
thre and thre together in a moꝝ  
nyng to spyre and see if there be  
any thyng euil kepte, and with  
that to looke and to pryue if a  
swoꝝde or a Spanishe cloke,  
or a purse be fallen aside, if ther  
be, thei syng in a mery note this  
is pro nobis. Other there be y  
for to cōduct & defend a whoꝝe  
when y court remoues (as one  
may say moꝝe then ruffians)  
they liue of the gaine of y mise-  
rable womā. Another hath fals  
tise, false marked cardes for to  
deceiue the innocentes, wyne  
their money, & leese their owne  
soules. And ther lackes not in y  
court olde women & wzinkled  
trottes y after their haruest is  
past

past, cloke the synnes of other;  
and beguile those that be chaste  
and vndermine such as be ma-  
ried, hurt their neighbours, sell  
maydens to whozedome for lu-  
cre, and do nozise them there-  
fore, wherof folowes that these  
olde whores sometyme sell we-  
ches better chepe then fishers  
do lampreyes. O beholde the  
company of the court, the holy-  
nes, the religiō, the brotherhed,  
and finally the foule disorder  
of thesame. And I say for my  
parte, go to the court who will  
and there abyde, and triumphe  
who will: as for my selfe I do  
remembre I am a christen mā,  
and that I must accompt for y  
tyme I haue lost, & therfore I  
had muche rather to labor and  
dygge & delue out of the court  
and



A Dispraise of  
and be saued, then to be nighe  
the kyng, my conscience not  
cleane nor pure.

The.xii.Chapiter.

That in the court of princes  
all say we will do it, but  
none do it.



Yas the great Philo-  
loper of great  
renoume amōges  
the Grecians, said  
vpō a tyme to the  
great Alexander Quilibet in  
suo negotio, hebetior est quam in  
alieno, meanyng, that cōmonly  
euery man is moze blinded in  
his owne affayres then in ano-  
ther mannes. And he so sayd  
by very good reason, for þ̄ that  
be menne, whiche for to geue a  
wise deliberate and sage coun-  
sel for to remedy a sodain mis-  
chief

chiefe, haue excellēt wittes, so þ  
it be in another mannes mat=  
ter. But in their own affaires  
they haue neither witte to go=  
uerne their owne houses, nor  
stable mind to couer their own  
miserye. Cayus Iulius Casar,  
Octauus Augustus, Marcus An=  
tonius, Septimius Seuerus, Mar=  
cus Aurelius, and other in great  
nombze, that were esteemed in  
their priuy busynes, that is to  
say, in the rulyng of the cōmon  
wealth, wonders wittie: but we  
reade that they were so negli=  
gent in gouernynge their owne  
housholdes, their wiues & their  
family, that it is muche to their  
shame and reproche: therefore  
suche be sene often to be good  
to rule the common welth, that  
be nothyng worth to gouerne  
I .i. their

their owne, and had nede (if it might be honestly sayd) to haue a ruler to rule them.

Plutarch reporteth that the noble & valiant capitaine Niseas neuer lost battell; but onely in trustyng to muche to his owne witte & iudgement. And if we beleue Hiarcas y<sup>e</sup> Philosopher, it is moze hurtfull to a manne to stand in his owne conceipt, then to phansye a woman: for in louyng a woman, a manne hurteth but himselfe: but in stickyng to muche to his owne phantasy, it may redound to y<sup>e</sup> hurt of a whole cōmon weale. All this that is sayd, shalbe to admonish them that tary in the court, to be cōuersant with the graue and sage persons, & with suche as be learned, and suche  
as



as haue good experiēce: For y  
graue, leagnes vertue: Scilēce  
is a certaine guide to a man: &  
experience, is the consūmacion  
of all. For although the cour-  
tier beyng yong, be neuer so  
sage, graue, riche or in fauor, he  
shall nede a father to counsaile  
him, a brother to persuaide him,  
a guyde to teache him the way,  
and a maister to instruct him,  
and a corrector to punish him:  
because the mischiefes, craftes,  
& wickednes doeth so abounde  
in the court that it is impossi-  
ble that a man alone may de-  
fende him from all, and vtterly  
resist them. For in the court  
there is none so high a waye to  
destruccion as for a man to be  
gouerned onely by himselfe, &  
haue his owne swinge.

The court is a perpetuall  
 dreame, a botomelesse whozle-  
 pole, an inchaunted phantasy,  
 and a mase: when he is in, he  
 cannot get out till he be moz-  
 founded. One of the best re-  
 medyes that the courtier may  
 get against so many evils, is to  
 haue a fapthfull frende that  
 flatters him nothing, but that  
 rather will correct and rebuke  
 him if he goe home late, if he  
 walke by night, if he be a false  
 player or whozehunter. But  
 where shall we fynde suche a  
 frende? For we se the friendship  
 in the court is commonly vsed  
 among yong courtiers in this  
 sort, that so sone as ii. or. iiii. are  
 met together, strapt fall they to  
 quarelling, fighting, rpyoting,  
 so that there is rather occasion  
 geuen

geuen to do euyl, then good coun-  
saile to refraine. Therfore he  
that haunteth the court, it wer  
mete that he had some frende to  
whom without feare he might  
common of his busynes, & that  
the multitude be also to him  
common frendes, but aboue al  
one perfite frende.

I would also he should kepe  
himselfe from the conuersacion  
of sedicious persons, from col-  
lericke persons & vacabondes,  
for the rascall sorte will floun-  
der and say, the kyng payeth  
naught, that those be in fauour  
haue all the swynge, that the  
officers are proude, that mens  
seruice is euil recompensed, &  
the good vnknownen: With  
these wordes & suche other like  
the poore courtiers forgettes to



serue & begynne to murmur.

Also the good christian man ought not to ceasse to amende his life, for y he hopeth to liue long: although those y be olde there occupy theselves rather in newe pastance, then to correcte their olde synnes. Ye shal fynde theim that promise euery day for to amende theselves in their age, & yet neuertheles dye there worse then deuils: the cause is that they all say we wil do and yet neuer do. There be some old dotyng fooles, whiche shal bragge of the kinges & princes whiche they haue serued, of the chaūgynge of offices y thet haue seen, and of the warres passed, and of the great mutabilitie & chaunge of fortune. And yet notwithstanding all that they haue

haue seen and endured, they be  
as greedy of gaine, and delight  
in yong and foolishhe pastymes  
as though thei wer newe to be-  
gyn to liue. Alas miserable  
men that in perpetual trauail,  
and continuall sorowe, and in-  
finite trouble haue passed their  
liues, euen frō their fyrst tyme  
of knowlege, whiche is, xv. ye-  
res) to the time of manhod, and  
then frō that tyme to their do-  
tyng age, & all to haue gained  
riches and increace in renoune:  
not in all this tyme once re-  
membze that in the steade of  
a true and perfite rest, they  
prepare for theim selues a hell  
both for body and soule. The  
courtier also ought not lightly  
to complaine of aduersities  
whiche many tymes come to  
i .iiii him

**A Dispraise of**

him, thinking that oftentymes  
(though it be our owne faulte)  
we do cōplaine of thinges whi-  
che should complaine of vs, if  
they had a tounge.

What tyme a man seeth him  
self base and is litle esteemed, or  
pooze & forgotten of the riche,  
and deceiued of that he looked  
surely to haue, incontinent he  
curses his fortune and lamen-  
tes his euil: In þe meane while  
it is not fortune that hath thus  
serued him, but him selfe that  
hath serched it and founde it.  
Suche a manne thinkes to be  
quickely riche, honored & este-  
med, & shortly after seeth him  
selfe pooze, ouerthrowen, dispi-  
sed, and blamed of all men, and  
cannot reuenge himselfe, but  
onely say, he is vnfortunate &  
vnhappye



vnhappy to the worlde, & that  
it is mishap: whiche is not so,  
but his owne folly that makes  
him to leaue the suretie of his  
house and prepareth himself to  
the hazard of fortune, and ther  
fore hath no cause to complain  
but of himself whiche chose the  
waye to it. The best is, after  
that a man purposeth himselfe  
to continue in the court, & then  
patiently he awayte and tarye  
the tyme of auancement or a  
uaūtage that he looketh for: or  
els if he cannot patiently dissē  
ble with the tyme, let him not  
remaine there, for contentacion  
consisteth not in the place, but  
in the ambitious heart, & trou  
bled mynde. And take this for  
a trueth, ye that be courtiers  
that if .ii. or .iii. thinges succede

to your purpose prosperously,  
there shall come a hundzeth o-  
uerthwarte the thynnes, either  
to you or to your frendes. For  
notwithstandyng that y<sup>e</sup> cour-  
tiers doynges & desyres come  
to good passe, there shalbe thin-  
ges for his freind or felow that  
goeth all awrye, whethy often  
tymes he launtées y<sup>e</sup> hurt of his  
frende, & that whiche is denied  
him more then the pleasure he  
hath of his owne happe: wher-  
fore there is alwayes lacke or  
faute of contentacion. Wyl ye  
any more? the beyng in court  
or out of the court, ye shal here  
no nother matter, then, what  
newes at the court? what doeth  
the kyng? where is he? where is  
the counsaile? and where lyeth  
the officers of y<sup>e</sup> household? and  
this

this is most true, y<sup>e</sup> they which  
desyre to here suche newes, are  
as desirous to see newes: And  
by this meanes the poore wene  
to make theinselfes riche, the  
riche the more to commaunde,  
and the lordes y<sup>e</sup> more to rule.

¶ What a pleasure is it for the  
to be in the court hoppyng that  
the kyng may knowe the, that  
those that be fauor may dye, or  
that fortune may chaunge, and  
that they come forwarde: And

it foloweth, that in taryng  
the tyme, the tyme decei-  
ueth them, & then death  
taketh them vn-  
ware.

The



The.xiii.Chapiter.

¶ That there is a smal nombre of  
them that be good in the Court  
and a great nombre of good  
in the cōmon wealth.



Plutarch in þ boke  
intitled De exilio  
tellet of þ great  
kyng Ptolome  
that hauyng on a  
daye at supper with him seuen  
Ambassadours of diuers pro-  
uinces, moued a question to  
them, whiche of al their cōmon  
welthes gonerned them selues  
with best lawes and customes?  
The sayd ambassadours, were  
Romeyns, Carthaginiens, Ci-  
ciliens, Rhodiens, Atheniens,  
Lacedemoniens, & Cicioniens:  
among whō the question was  
effectually debated afore the  
kyng, forasynuche as every one  
of

of the beyng affeccionate to his  
countrey aleged the wisest rea-  
son y<sup>e</sup> he could. The good king  
desirous to knowe the trueth &  
the resolution of the question  
commaunded that euey one of  
the Ambassadors should tell  
of the beste lawes or customes  
that were in their comon welth  
thre pointes, and that therby it  
might esely be sene whiche was  
better ruled and deserued more  
praise. Then the ambassadour  
of the Romaines beganne and  
sayd, In Rome the temples be  
honored, y<sup>e</sup> gouernours obeyed  
and the euil chastised. The am-  
bassadour of Carthage sayd, In  
Carthage the noble men neuer  
cease to prepare to the warre,  
the pooze people to traueil, and  
the Philosophers to teache.

The

A Dispraise of

The ambassadour of the Cictiens sayd, In Cicill is true iustice executed, trouth is beloved, and equalitie praised. The Ambassadour of the Rhodiens sayd, In Rhodes the olde men are honest, the yong men chaste, and the women meke and gentle. The Ambassadour of the Atheniens sayd, the Atheniens do not consent that y<sup>e</sup> riche should be parciall, nor y<sup>e</sup> meane people idle, nor the gouernours without leaenyng. The ambassadour of the Lacedemoniens sayd, in Lacedemony enuy raines not because al are equal nor couetousnes because all is common, nor idlenes because all men traueil. The Ambassadour of Cicioniens sayd, in Cicion they receiue no straungers

inuentors



inuētors of newes, nor Phisi-  
ous that kyl the whole, nor ad-  
uocates that makes the proces-  
ses immortall.

When kyng Diolome and  
his companye had heard these  
so good and hol<sup>y</sup> obseruaūces,  
he praised greatly the institū-  
cion of euery of theim, sayng,  
that he could not iudge whiche  
was the best. This hystorie is  
well woorthy to be noted, and  
better to be folowed: And I  
beleue if in our dayes so many  
ambassadors shuld mete, dis-  
puting as these did of their cō-  
mon welthes, thei should finde  
mo thynges to blame & speake  
euil of (and that without com-  
parison) then to praise & com-  
mende. In tynes passed the  
kyniges houses were so well re-  
formed

formed, the kynges themselves  
 so wise, and the gouernours so  
 moderate, that litle offences wer  
 chastised, and once to thinke of  
 great offences forbidden: to the  
 entent that the chasticement  
 should be terrour to the euil. &  
 the pꝛchibicion a plaine aduice  
 vnto the good: It is not so in  
 our common welthes, where is  
 done so muche euil, and com-  
 mitted so many bitter offences &  
 vnhappynes, that those whiche  
 the auncientes did chastice for  
 deadly sinnes by death, we dis-  
 semble them to be but veniall:  
 the truans and wantons be so  
 entertained as though we lac-  
 ked them: and not as mete to  
 be chased and dꝛyuen away.  
 My lady the widow or my ma-  
 sters that is married, if they fall  
 to

to leude and wanton liuyng, ye  
shal not fynde one that wil say  
madā oz mastres ye donought:  
but rather sixe hundzeth that  
shall procure her dishonoz.

This is in our tyme, suche is  
our fashon and maners which  
causeth euil: so that he is  
more to be praised whiche may  
be called good in our common  
welth, then any of the Consuls  
of Rome, because that in þe olde  
time it was almost a monstous  
thing to fynde one euil among  
a hundzeth, & now it is a great  
chaunce to fynde one good a-  
mongest a hundzeth.

The holy scripture praiseth  
Abraham þe was iust in Calde,  
Loth that was iust in Sodom  
Danpel in Babylon, Tobp in  
Niniute, and Neemyas in Ba-  
k.i. masco



malco. And likewise may we among this Cathalog of holy men number y good courtiers if there be any, but it cannot be forasmuche as none goeth about to moue the courtiers to vertue, but that counsaile them to perdition.

There is in the court so many bacabondes, so many players, blasphemers, & deceiuers that we may be abashed to see suche a multitude: but it were a noueltie to heare of the contrary, for why? the worlde hath nothing in hisrosiers but thornes, and for frutes of trees, but leaues, for bynes but byars, & in their garnerdes but strawe, and in their treasures, but Alcumyn. O golden worlde, O world desired, O world passed: the difference betwixte you and

**The Courtiers life.**

vs is, that afoze you litle and litle the worlde passeth, but afoze vs it is quite passed. In the **D** worlde euery mā undertaketh to inuent, to do, to begin and to make an ende of that he will: and that whiche is worst of all, liueth as he will: but the ende is right doubtfull. There is litle to be trusted in the **D** worlde. And contrarywise litle to Defende, litle to enioy, & very litle to kepe. There is many thynges to be desired, many thynges to be amended, & many thynges to be lamented. Our aunceters had the Iron worlde, but our worlde may wel be called the Dirtie worlde, because it kepeth vs continually in a filthy myer, and alwayes we be there in defiled and raped.

A Dispraise of

The. xiii. Chapter.

Of many offaites in the court, and  
that there be better husbandmen,  
then commonly is of courtiers.



The Poet Homer hath  
written of y<sup>e</sup> trauels  
of Ulixes one of the  
princes of the Gre-  
kes: Quintus Curtius of Alex-  
ander and Darius: Moyses of  
Ioseph, And of them of Egypt:  
Samuel of Dauid & of Saul:  
Titus Liuius, of the Romaines:  
Thucidides of Iason, with y<sup>e</sup>  
Minotaure: and Salust of  
Iugurth & Cathclyne. I then  
willyng to folowe these good  
auctors, haue vndertaken to  
write the vnkynnd trauailes of  
the court that the courtiers of  
our tyme haue which haue pa-  
cience enough for to suffre the,  
and



and no wysedome to auoyde  
 them: then it is not without a  
 cause if I do call the trauailes  
 of the court vnkynde, for they  
 be accustomed vnto it as the  
 olde hozses are to the packesla-  
 ble and to the plough, syth that  
 the courtiers themselves do suf-  
 fer them so muche and haue no  
 profite therof. Some men wil  
 say that I am euil aduised be-  
 cause I wryte þ courtiers haue  
 not their ease, seyng that he þ  
 may attaine to be in the courte  
 is accompted to be fortunate.  
 But he abuseth him selfe, if he  
 thinke that al suche as are out  
 of the court be beastes & igno-  
 rant persons, and he only wise:  
 they rude & he delicate: he ho-  
 noyed and they vile, they staine  
 ryng and, the eloquent.

If it were so that God would that the most perfite men shuld be in the court, it shuld be to vs moze then a faulte, not incontinently to be a courtier: knowing that ther can be no better tyme employed, then that whiche is bestowed in hearyng the wise & sage men: but when all is sayd the places doeth not better the men, but the men the places.

God knowes (for example) how many gentle and good honest myndes laboꝝ in the villages, and how many foles & lubbers bragge it in palaices. God knoweth howe many well ordered wittes and iudgementes is hid in the villages, and how many rude wittes and weak braines face and brace in the court. How many of there in y  
court

court the whiche although thei  
haue offices, dignities, estates  
& preeminences, yet in the vil-  
lage (after a maner of spea-  
kyng) with great pain they are  
not able to rule .x. men. Howe  
many come out of y<sup>e</sup> court cor-  
rectors of other, that the selues  
in the villages should be cor-  
rected? O how many thynges  
is sayd amonges the pooze la-  
bozers worthy to be noted? And  
contrary, spoken afoze princes  
worthy to be mocked? O how  
many is in the court that make  
them selues highly to be este-  
med, not for to be honest & dili-  
gent, but to come in auctoritie?  
And how many is there in the  
village forgotten and not sette  
by, more for lacke of fauor then  
for either lacke of witte or dili-  
gence



**A Dispraise of**

gence: The princes geue the offices: Those that be in fauor haue the entrie: nature the good bloud: The parentes the patrimony: and þe deseruyng, honoz: but to be wise and sage cometh onely of God, and menne haue not the power to take it away. And if it were so that princes might geue good witte to whō they would, thei should kepe it for thei inselues, seying they neuer leese, but for lacke of knowledge. I take it for an euil point of suche as newly cometh frō the court to þe villiage, & beyng there, rather vse mockyng then tast the benefite therof. But in the meane tyme, thou seest their maner of life, þe is, to go to bed at midnight and rise at x. of the clocke, & in makyng ready till noone

noone, trimmyng their busshes,  
or bearde, and setting the cap  
away. And all the day after, to  
talke of his darlyng y<sup>e</sup> he hath  
in the court, or of the battell of  
Granado wher he did meruails.  
And some there be of them that  
will lye and bragge that they  
were at the iorney of Pauay w<sup>th</sup>  
the capitaine Antony Deleua:  
at Tunes with the Emperour:  
or at Turton w<sup>th</sup> Andzew Do-  
ria. And for all his bragging he  
was no better then a ruffian or  
a zacar of Tholydo, or a knaue  
of Cordoua. We haue reherfed  
these thynges before wrytten, to  
cause our minion friskers to  
leau mocking of the pooze in-  
habitanes of the village, este-  
myng them to be but fooles &  
lurdens. For I beleue, if my  
k. v. maister

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maister the Emperoz would ban-  
nische all y<sup>e</sup> company of fooles.  
I feare me he were like to dwel  
alone in the court.

Let vs say then, that very late  
thei of y<sup>e</sup> court know themselves  
and y<sup>e</sup> order of their life & p<sup>r</sup>ofes-  
sion, I meane y<sup>e</sup> p<sup>r</sup>ofession of y<sup>e</sup>  
religiō whiche thei kepe strait-  
ly, the whiche consistes in this:  
theip<sup>r</sup>omise to please the deuil,  
and to cōtent the court, and to  
folowe the worlde: They p<sup>r</sup>o-  
mise to be euer pensife, sad and  
ful of suspicion: They p<sup>r</sup>omise  
alwayes to be choppynge and  
chaungynge, full of busynes, to  
bye, to sel, to wepe, to sinne, and  
neuer to refozme themselves:  
They p<sup>r</sup>mise also to be iagged  
and ragged, an hungred, in-  
debted and dispised: They p<sup>r</sup>o-  
mise



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misle to suffre rebukes of Loz=des, theft of their neighbours, iniuries of colerike men, mockeries of y<sup>e</sup> people, reproche of their parentes : and finally, missyng & lackyng of frendes.

Lo this is the profession and rule of the obseruauntes of the court: whiche I wyll not name a rule, but a confusion, not a order but a disorder, not a monastery, but a hel, and a religiō not of bꝛethꝛen, but of dissolute persons: no poꝛe Hermites but coueteous worldely menne. O pitie, O lacke of good iudgement. The Oracle of Apollo beyng asked by the Ambassadors of the Romaines where lay the point foꝛ one to gouern himself wel, The answer was, foꝛ a manne to knowe well his owne

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owne estate & Degree that there-  
by one may rule his desires, &  
brydle his affeccions. The cour-  
tier desirynge al, & perceueryng  
in nothyng, shall thinke in his  
mynde, that if he get not in one  
yere some fee or office, that it is  
not for lacke of knowlege: but  
as a person ignorant & foolish  
blameth his fortune, and cur-  
seth the hour that euer he came  
thether, wout calling to mynd  
that y<sup>e</sup> court is as y<sup>e</sup> Palace tre  
whose rote is a lea dome vnder  
the ground, before that he shew  
two fyngers brede of leaues a-  
boue the ground. In like ma-  
ner, a man must be long in ser-  
uice before he be promoted:  
yet so muche resteth that y<sup>e</sup> per-  
seueryng & abidyng by it, cau-  
seth a man to hope: For to say  
the

the trueth, it is seen, if there be  
thre whiche deserue more then  
they haue, there be thre hundreth  
that haue more then they de-  
serue. How seldome tymes  
doeth fortune that she ought  
for to do? And how many ty-  
mes fortunes hazard & chafice  
doeth better then the assurance  
of vertue: because she measu-  
res her merites by y<sup>e</sup> euil lēgth  
of opinion, and not by reason:  
she makes the water burne w<sup>o</sup>  
out fyre, the knife to cutte with  
out stele, the Candle to light  
without flaine, the myll to go  
wout water, & the cause is only  
her inconstancy. If she laugh  
in y<sup>e</sup> court of any, it is but with  
her eares, If she wepe, it had  
been better neuer for a man to  
haue come out of his house: If  
she



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she lifte any vyppre aloft, it is to  
throwe him downe again lower  
then he was: If sometyme she  
dissemble, it is to take one in a  
trap. Let no man then trust of  
fortune, for she is so variable,  
that she neuer holdeth her pro-  
mise of that she geueth, neither  
by worde nor yet by writyng  
that she maketh.

The .xv. Chapiter

That among courtiers is neither  
kept amitie nor fayrfulnes: And  
howe muche the Court is full of  
trauail, of enuye & rancour,



One of the most ex-  
cessiue trauailes a-  
mong the courtiers  
is, that none is re-  
sident there wout  
he be hated or at the lest that he  
hate: that is not pursued or els  
doeth

The Courtiers life.

Doteh pursue, that doeth not  
mocke or els is mocked.

And one vnhappy thyng is in  
the court, many there be that  
will do of their bonette to you,  
that gladly would se your hea-  
des of by the shoulderts: And  
suche there be that makes re-  
uerence vnto you that would  
haue his legge broken to se you  
dead and caried to your graue:  
Is it not a great pitie to be cō-  
uersaunt all daye together, to  
laugh & make merue one with  
another, and yet haue mortall  
hate? Is not this moze then a  
dissimulaciō, to honoz him whō  
they would be glad to see led to  
the gallous? One thyng for al,  
it is ambition & to muche hope  
of sharpe and bitter fortune, &  
lacke of knowlege, of this, that  
amitie

amicie well obserued, is muche  
worth to moderate a manne.

What life, what fortune, what  
tall may he take & seeth himself  
daily present in the court, wher  
is so muche theft, brybry, mur-  
ders, poysoners, felons, & traya-  
tours ready to betray and sell  
a man, and he himself betrayed  
and solde? And contrarywyse  
what felicitie is it to be in the  
companye of those, with whom  
a man may faythfully recreate  
himselfe fearyng noman? In  
the court, there be gentlemen so  
rooted in vengeaunce & hatred  
that by no meane, request, nor  
gentlenes a manne may direct  
them fro their euil ententes, in  
suche maner that they be glad  
to make warre with their owne  
houses, to chafe peace fro them  
selues



selues to the houses of their enemies: Wherby one may wel presuppose as is aforesayd, that vnneth one may hope to haue frendes in the court, and lesse trust: and the greater menne in auctoritie, y more a frayde they be to fall. What then causes a man there to tary in suche travail? I haue wonder that any can suffre it or haue a heart to dissemble it. O how fortunate is he that leadeth his life in the village, with y meane busynes of his litle possession, in comparison of y courtier whose estate is euer vnhappy & of al partes miserable, that neuer ceases to hope of thynges vaine, in procuring vniust thinges & suche thynges that neuer can be determined. And if thoughtes  
l.i. were

A Dispraise of

were wynde, & his desires waters, it should be greater danger to saile in his heart then in the maine sea. In the court is one thyng I wotte not what, & one thyng I knowe not howe, and one thyng I vnderstande not, whiche causeth there incessantly complaintes, and continuall choppyng and chaungyng, and euermore dispite & enuy: and that worst is, there is no libertie to depart thence.

The yoke of the court is hard, the bondes faste tyed and the plough so tedious that those that wene to be the first to triumph, are the first that labor & drawe the weightie burdens. And suche as are poore & ignorant men suffre these intollerable trauailes, because they  
would

The Courtiers life.

would not be as subiectes in their owne countreys, and to haue a greater libertie to do euil. But God knowes what suche libertie costeth them, that for a shorthe and vaine pleasure purchase to theimselues, continual trauail and perpetual bondage. The propertie of this vicious libertie, or better to call it, this mischeuous subiection, is, that at the beginnyng it seemeth somewhat pleasaunt: but in the ende al couertes to a bitterness, sorow, and lamentacion, chiefly when a man hath experience by litle & litle of the vice that this life conteyneth. For if he accompany with women, he must flatter them, serue them, & intreate theim: And if money lacke, then must there be some deuillish shift made.



A Dispraisle of

deuillish the nede. For why, when  
one commeth new to the court,  
my lady dame gorgeous, ledes  
him a trayne. She entertaynes  
him, she makes muche on him,  
she colles him: but when she  
spyeth him to lacke, she sendes  
him to pasture in the bare fiel-  
des. And if the tyme of eatyng  
come, the courtier must often  
tymes fede with them, whome he  
would see eaten without sauces.  
Nowe, if his turne be to playe,  
therin is litle profite: if he wynn,  
he must liberally departe with  
the gaine to those that stand by:  
& if he loose, they restore to him  
neuer a penny. And if the cour-  
tiers turne be to iest, and to be  
mery, therin he findeth no fruit  
for the courtiers playe begin-  
neth in fayre wordes, & endes  
with

The Courtiers life.

with braulynge, chidinge, & fightinge. And forasmuche as it is the worst life of al other lyues: Let vs conclude that there is nothyng worse then a vaine courtier, & an idle husbandmā.

The.xvi.Chapiter.

By how much the comon welches and the courtes of the tyme passed wer more perfite then the courtes of the tyme present,

**T**he kyng Anchyses did lament y<sup>e</sup> destruction of the proude Troye, done by the princes of Grece: The Quene Rosaine bewailed her husband Darius, when he was ouercome by the great Alexander.

Jeremy the prophet cōplained the estate of Babylon, when it was helde captiue. Kyng Da-

**A Dispralle of**

uid lamented his soonne Absolon when Joab kilde him. The lady Cleopatra thought no nother but to dye for sorow when her deare & welbeloued Marcus Antonius was vanquished by the Emperour Augustus. The Consul Marcus Marcellus lamented the citie of Syracuse when he sawe it on a fyre. Salust, Rome, euil gouerned. The Patriarche Jacob his soonne Joseph: The kyng Demetrius his good father Antigenus when he founde him dead at the battail of Marathone. It shalbe also conuenient that amonges these wel renowned princes we should lament the miseries of our tyme, in the whiche we see thynges so metueilous, that y curious auctours of the tyme passed



passed neuer wrote thynges se-  
blable vnto them: Nor the men  
in those dayes neuer sawe the  
like. Truth it is that the Chro-  
niclers in those dayes wrote  
what they would. In our tyme  
scant any man dare speake.

The Philosopher Ariminius  
hath written of y<sup>e</sup> aboundaunce  
of Egypt: Demophō of the far-  
tilitie of Arabia: Thucidides of  
the treasures of Tyrus: Ascle-  
pius of the Mines of Europe:  
Dodrillus in the commendacion  
and praisynge of Grece: Leo-  
nides of the triumphes of The-  
bes: Eumenides of the gouerne-  
ment of Athens: Thesiphontes  
of the order that is kepte in the  
court, and of y<sup>e</sup> princely houses  
of the Sicioniens: Pytheas of  
the profite that came by y<sup>e</sup> lytle  
l.iii.                      speakyng

A Dispraise of

speaking of the disciples of Socrates : Apollinus of the continencie and abstinence that was kepte in schooles of the diuine Plato : Myronides of the great exercise, and of the litle rest that was in the house of Hyarcas : Aulus Gelyus of y<sup>e</sup> temperance and litle eatyng, and of the moderate slepyng of the disciples of maister Fauorinus : Plutarch of the wise women of Greece, & of the chaste wyues of Rome : Dyodorus, how those that were inhabitantes in y<sup>e</sup> Isles of Balyares caste their treasure into the sea for feare lest the straungers for coueteousnes of their riches shuld make the warres, and to the entent also that no parcialitie shuld grow among themselves.

Hearing

Hearying then all this that  
that I haue sayd, I Demaunde  
of the reader his aduise what  
my penne should write of our  
tyme? If we should write of  
bountie and veritie, we should  
falsely lye: If of riches, men be  
so gredy that all be disposed to  
desyre and hunger couetously.  
How shal we then praise y men  
of our tyme? Shal we say they  
be hardy and puissaunt & lear-  
ned, and we se that thei employ  
their myndes to nothyng els  
but to robbe and beguile eche  
one the other? How shall we  
praise theim of prosperitie and  
helth, seyng that the pestilence  
and the frenche pockes moze  
then common is among them?  
How shall we commende their  
continencie & abstinence, seyng  
l.v. that



**A Dispraise of,**

that scant in fiftie yeres ye shal  
not fynde one that will brydle  
his lust and desyre? Shall we  
praise them of litle rest and of  
much exercise, when we se that  
there is a greater nombze that  
geue themselves to idlenes and  
thefery, then to honest trauels  
& paines? How shall we praise  
them of temperat eatyng, when  
we see in our dayes the belly is  
mennes God? How shall we co  
mend them for haupyng chaste  
women and obediēt, seyng that  
there is nothyng more cōmon  
among them then adultry?

Shal we say, they be not coue-  
tous, seyng that not onely men  
serche golde and syluer in depe  
mynes, but men traual to seke  
it as farre as the Indiens, of a  
pyneyarde so froson, of a tre so  
dry

Dye, of fruit so vnripe, of a wa-  
ter so troubled, of bread so euil  
bake, of so much false gold, of a  
world so suspicious, what shal  
we hope any other thereof but  
euil & confusion: Let vs reade  
that is witten of the courtes  
of the princes of Siria, of Percia  
of Macedonia, of Grecia, and fi-  
nally of the Romaines: And let  
vs cōferre these to our courtes,  
and ye shal see suche euils and  
vicious customes in our com-  
mon welthes, that the auncien-  
tes did neuer attaine to know  
lege how to committe suche ab-  
ominacions, nor yet (I say) to  
inuēt such euils. In those most  
happy times & golden worldes  
an euil conditioned man scant  
durst to haue shewed himselfe  
in any honest cōpany: but now  
alas

A Dispraise of

alas (a thing to be lamenēted) the worlde is so replenished with dissolute & corrupt liuyng, that it is counted but a small faulte to be euil, excepte he be suche a one as is past al shame & grace. The courtiers wil not deny me but that whiles they geue attēdance for the vprisng of their maisters, they tell eche one the other what pastyme they haue had the night befoze, how they haue plaied, sworne and stard at their game, of their laughynges, and the cōpanies they haue had w the gentle dames: which of them was fayrest and best apparelled: and sometyme in secret of those that they haue committed adultery withal.

And thus, as the worlde is newe, the inuēcions are newe, & playes



playes new, the garmêtes new,  
newe speakyng, newe maners,  
& new euery yere, euery moneth  
ye and euery day, & euery hour:  
we see vices so largely delated,  
and vertue so diminished, that  
I am ashamed to write it: And  
the true cause is, that in y<sup>e</sup> court  
vertue hath many controllers  
and enemies, and vice innuue-  
rable vpholders and mayntei-  
ners. For if there be brought  
into the court one laudable cu-  
stome, it is no soner come, but  
furthwith it is chased awaye:  
And on the other part, vice can  
not so sone appeare, but it is as  
soone embraced & entertained.  
The sage lawyer Lygurgus did  
defend expressely by a law that  
the straungers shuld not knowe  
the secretes of his cōmon welth  
no

A Dispraise of

noz that his citezens should meddle muche abroad, for that purpose as is said, that in med-  
lyng with them, they should not learne their vices noz their bas-  
betous condicions.

In the tyme when Marcus Portius was Consull, ther came an excellent Musician out of Grece into Rome, whiche for because that he put one stryng moze on his harpe then was accustomed to be plaid withall, he was by the consent of þ people banished from Rome & his harpe burnt: Howbeit in this our tyme, we could well agree with Musique, and would not passe how many strynges the harpe had: so that men might agree and stay them selues.

Plutarch sayth that he saw once  
at

at Rome a priest of Grece sto-  
ned to death in the great place  
of Campus Marcus, because that  
he did sacrifice to the Goddesse  
Berecinthe in other maner then  
they were accustomed to be sa-  
crificed vnto. Suetonius affir-  
meth that in.iiii.C.lxiii.yeres  
whiche was the tyme that the  
temple Vierges Vastales endu-  
red, there was neuer found but  
iiii. euil liuyng persons, whi-  
che were Domicia, Rhea, Albina  
& Cornelia, the whiche for their  
offences were openly buryed  
quicke. If at this daye one  
would registre the names of  
suche like, to be so punished, I  
leauē it to your iudgemēt whe-  
ther there shuld lacke hāgmen  
to do execucion. Trebelius Pu-  
blius sayd that the Emperoure  
Aurilianus



**A Dispraise of**

Aurilianus Quintus toke a gret  
frende of his from the office of  
Dictator, whiche was named  
Rogerius, onely because he had  
daunsed at the weddyng of Po-  
steria Auia his nigh neighbour  
saiyng, that the good Judge  
should not leaue his grauitie &  
vse suche wilde and common  
plaies. But so it is, whatsoeuer  
this Emperour sayd, In our  
tyme we will geue licence to  
iudges to remeue their feete as  
fast as they will, so that they  
holde their handes stil. It shal  
make no matter to the pooze  
pleadet whether his iudge sing  
or daunce, so that he ministre  
iustice with expedition, that the  
the pooze man come not often  
tymes and geue to muche at-  
tendaunce. In this case it were  
very

The Courtiers life.

Very good to rayse y<sup>e</sup> Emperoz  
Domitian, whiche as Suetonius  
wyteth made a lawe, that who-  
souer prolonged the proces of  
his clyant more then one yere,  
that he should for euer be ba-  
nished Rome. If this holy  
lawe had dured to this daye,  
there shuld haue been more ba-  
nished in Rome and els where,  
then there are now citezens.

The .xvii. Chapiter.

Of diuers noble and valiaunt men,  
that left the court & the great cities  
and dreyne them to their proper  
houses, more by wil, then by  
necessitie.



Arcus Crassus a cap-  
taine of the Romai-  
nes, was greatly cō-  
mended and praised  
for that he was valiaunt in the  
m.i. warre

A Disprasse of

warre, and wise in the busynes  
of his houlsholde: This is that  
Crassus that folowed the parti-  
alitie of y<sup>e</sup> Consul Silla against  
Marius and Iulius Caesar after  
Dictator. It chaunsed on a  
tyme that by the fortune of the  
sea, the sayd Caesar was prisoner  
to certain pyrates and robbers  
of the sea, and he sayd boldly to  
ii. or. iii. of the best of them that  
kept him fast bounde, It doeth  
(sayd he) greue me muche, not  
for that I am taken prisoner,  
forasmuche as that is but ha-  
zard of the warre, but of y<sup>e</sup> plea-  
sure that myne enenye Crassus  
will take when he doeth heare  
of y<sup>e</sup> newes. This Crassus was  
Maister to a Philosopher na-  
med Alexandrius, that gouer-  
ned him as a father, counsailed  
him



The Courtiers life.

him as a frēde, and taught him  
as a master: And this did he by  
the space of .xviii. yeres, whiche  
passed, then he demaunded li-  
cence to retorne to his cōūtre:  
And goyng his way, sayd these  
wordes vnto Alexāder: I aske  
of the none other rewarde for  
my payne, nor for my labors in  
teachyng of thee, then to graūt  
that I shall neuer retorne to  
the court againe: & when I am  
gone that thou wilt neuer write  
vnto me of thyne affaires, for  
I am so wepy of beyng a court-  
ier, that I wil not onely leaue  
the court, but also forgett all  
that euer I sawe or heard in it.  
Denis of Siracuse, albeit that he  
was a cruel tyrant, yet notwith-  
standing he was a great frende  
to the Philosophers, and a ho-  
m.ii. nozer

**A Dispraise of**

nozet of wise men. And he sayd  
that he toke muche pleasure to  
heare of the wise and sage men  
of Grece, but he beleued them  
not, because their teachynges  
were wordes without dedes.  
Seuen of the moste sagest and  
beste learned of Grece came to  
Siracuse a citie where the sayd  
Denys was resident: that is to  
say, Plato, Chylo, Demophon,  
Diogenes, Myrtho, Pyllades and  
Surranus the whiche medled  
more of y<sup>e</sup> affaires of Denis then  
he did of their doctrin. Dyoge-  
nes dwelled a xi. yere with him,  
and after returned to his coun-  
tre, where he beyng a washing  
of herbes for his diner, another  
Philosopher sayd to him: If  
thou haddest not left y<sup>e</sup> seruice  
of Denis thou needest not now  
to

**The Courtiers life.**

to haue taken þ paine to washe  
thyne owne herbes and make  
them redy for thy dyner. To  
whom Dyogines answered: If  
thou couldest haue been cōtent  
to haue washed & eatē herbes: þ  
nedest not at this tyme to haue  
been in the court of Dionisius.  
Cato the Censor of whomin the  
names of Cato fyrst began, was  
esteemed for one of the wyldest of  
the Romaines: And he was ne-  
uer sene in. lxviii. yeres (for so  
lōg he liued) not once to laugh  
nor to do any thing repugnant  
to his sage grauntie. Plutarch  
sayeth that he was in speakyng  
pudent, gentle in cōuersacion,  
in correctyng sharpe & seuerer,  
in presentes liberall, in eatyng  
sober, and in that that he pro-  
mised, sure and certain, & in ex-  
m.iii. ecuting



A Dispraise of

cutting iustice irreprehensible.

After the age of. lv. yeres he  
left the court of Rome, & with  
drew himself to a litle village  
nigh to Picene, which is now at  
this preset called Puzol: & there  
he passed y<sup>e</sup> residue of his yeres  
in quiet and rest, accompanied  
only with his booke, & takyng  
for a singuler recreation for to  
go twice or thrise a day to walk  
in the fayre fieldes & the vines,  
& himselfe oft to laboz in them.  
And it fortunied on a day when  
he was absent from his house  
that one wrote with a cole vpon  
his doore O felix Cato, tu solus  
scis viuere; whiche is to say, O  
happy Cato, thou only knowest  
how to liue.

Lucullus Consull and capi-  
tain, a Romain, right valiant,  
brought

The Courtiers life.

brought to an end the warre a-  
gainst the Parthes whiche had  
continued by the space of .xvi.  
peres, wherby he gat great ho-  
nor of the citezens of Rome, &  
immortall renoune for himself  
and great riches for his family.  
And it is sayd of him, that he  
onely of all the Romaines did  
enjoy peaceably in his age, the  
riches that he had wōne in his  
youth in the warres. And after  
when he came from Asia & saw  
that the common welth was in  
deuision betwixt Marius & Silla,  
he determined to leaue Rome &  
make a house in the countrey  
nigh to Naples vpon the sea  
syde (nowe at this p̄sent tyme  
called **Castel of Lobo**) which  
he edified and liued there .xviii.  
peres in great tranquillitie. His  
house

house was haunted with many people, specially with great capitaines that went into Asia, and with Ambassadors that came from Rome, whiche he receiued very gently & benignly. One night when his seruantes had made ready his supper with a lesse dyet then he was accustomed to haue, they excusing themselves that they ordained the lesse because he had no straungers: He sayd vnto them, although sayd he, that there be no straungers with me, knowe not you that Lucullus must suppe with Lucullus.

Plutarch speakyng of this valiaunt mannes exercise that he did after he was retired to the place aforesayd, sayeth that he delited muche in huntynge and hawkyng



hawkyng, but aboue all pleasures he most delited in his Library, there reading and disputyng incessantly. Helius Speri-  
tianus sayth that Dioclesian, after that he had gouerned the Emperre xviii. yeres, forsoke it, and wente to take his pleasure in the fieldes, there in quiet to ende the residue of his life, say-  
yng: that it was tyme for him to leaue y<sup>e</sup> Daügerous estate of the court & get him to a peace-  
able life in the village. Two yeres after he was thence rety-  
red, y<sup>e</sup> Romaines sent vnto him a solemne Ambassade to inuite and desire him effectuously that he would take pitie of y<sup>e</sup> cōmon welth, and returue, promisyng him that so long as they liued there shuld none haue the name

of Emperour but he. Nowe  
when y Ambassadors arriued  
at his house, they found him in  
a litle garden wher he was set-  
tyng of Lettys and Onyons:  
And hearyng what they sayd  
vnto him, he answered in this  
wise: Do you not thynke my  
frendes, that it is muche better  
for him that can sowe his Let-  
tys, and afterwarde pleasantly  
and merely to eate thesame, so  
still to exercise himselfe, then to  
returue & entre into the goulfe  
of troubles in a comon welth?  
I haue assaied bothe, I knowe  
what it is to commaunde in the  
court, and what it is to liue &  
labor in the village, wherfore  
I pray you suffre me here to a-  
bide in paciencie, for I desire ra-  
ther here to liue with the labor  
of

The Courtiers life.

of my hādes , then in the sorow  
and cares of an Empire. Note  
by this example that the life of  
the laborer is more to be desi-  
red, then the life of a prince.

Cleo and Pericles succeeded  
in the rulyng of the common  
welth after Solon, a man excel-  
lently lerned and wel esteemed,  
and taken among the Greciās  
for half a God, by the reason of  
the wyse lawes he made amōg  
the Atheniens: These two no-  
ble gouernours were muche be-  
loued, because that (as Plutarch  
telleth) Pericles whiche .xxx. ye-  
res had the administraciō of y  
busines and affaires of y citie,  
was neuer sene to come into a-  
ny mans house but his owne,  
nor yet to sit in any open place  
among y cōmon people, suche  
a grauitie



A Dispraffe of  
a grauitie was in him.

Aboute the yeres of his age  
whiche was. lx. he went from  
Athens to a litle village, where  
he ended the rest of his dayes,  
studiynge and passing the tyme  
in husbandrye: He had a litle  
small gate or wicket in the en-  
tryng of his house, ouer which  
was wrytten Inueni portū, spes,  
& fortuna valete. That is to  
say, forasmuche as now (and be-  
fore I haue knowlege of vani-  
tee) I haue founde the porte of  
rest, fye of hope, and fortune  
farewell. By this example, no  
courtier can say that he leadeth  
a sure life, but onely that court-  
ier whiche doeth as this wyle  
captain did, withdraw himself.

Lucius Seneca, was as who  
shuld say, a right leder to good  
maners

The Courtiers life.

maners, & a instructor to good letters to Nero the sixt Emperour of Rome, with whom he taried. xliiij. yeres, & had great doynges of thiges pertainyng to the cōmon wealth, as well of priuate causes as otherwyse, because he was sage and of great experience. And at the last, cōmyng to great age and werped with the continual conflictes & busynesse of the court, lefte the court and went and dwelt in a litle mancion he had nigh to Nole Campana, where he liued after, a long tyme as witnesseth his bookes De officiis, de Ira, de bono viro, de aduersa fortuna and other bookes whiche were to long to reherse. At last (fortune and mannes malice did their office) Nero cōmaunded him

A Dispaire of

him to be flaine, not for that he  
had committed any crime wor-  
thy to dye, or done any thing o-  
therwise then an honest manne  
ought to do: but onely because  
the lecherous Domicia hated  
him: Note well reader this ex-  
ample, that sometyne fortune  
pursueth him that forsaketh þ  
court, aswel as the courtier.

Scipio the Affrican was so este-  
med among þ Romaines, that  
in. xxi. yeres, whyles þ he was  
in the warrs he neuer lost bat-  
tell: And yet made he warre in  
Asia, Europ, and Affrica, and  
to this, neuer committed acte  
worthy of reproche: And yet  
he wan Affrica and put to sacke  
Carthage, brought in bōdage  
Numance, ouercame Hannibal,  
and restored Rome weakened  
and



**The Courtiers life.**

and nere destroyed by the losse  
they had at y<sup>e</sup> battail of Cānes.  
And yet for all this, beyng of y<sup>e</sup>  
yeres of. lxx. he withdrewe him  
frō the court of Rome to a litle  
village betwixte Puzoll and  
Capua, where he liued a solita-  
ry life, and so content withal,  
that whiles he taried there a xi.  
yeres space, he neuer entred in-  
to Rome nor Capua.

The diuine Plato was bozne  
in Liconia, and was nourished in  
Egypt, and learned in Athens:  
It is red of him, that he answe-  
red y<sup>e</sup> Ambassadors of Cirene  
that required of him lawes to  
gouerne theim selues in sure  
peace, in this wise: *Difficilimū  
est homines amplissima fortuna  
ditatos legibus cōtinere.* Which  
is to vnderstand, that it is hard  
to

A Dispraise of

to byrnyng to passe to make riche  
men to be subiect to the rigour  
of the lawe. To conclude, Plato  
not willyng to abide longer the  
clamour & cry of the court, went  
and dwelt in a litle village two  
myles fro Athens called Aca-  
demia, where the good old man  
after he had tarped there. xiiii.  
yeres, teachyng and wrytyng  
many notable doctrines, ended  
there his moste happye dayes.  
After the memozye of him, the  
auncientes called y<sup>e</sup> village Aca-  
demia, whiche is to say in Eng-  
lish, a schole: The cōclusion is  
that all these honourable sage  
princes & wise menne, left Mo-  
narchies, kyngdomes, cities, &  
great riches, and went into the  
villages, there to serche a poze,  
an honest, & a peaccable life.

Not

The Courtiers life.

Not that I will saye that some  
of these leste y court, to be there  
pooze and banished and rebu-  
ked, but of their fre wil and fre  
libertie, minding to liue a quiet  
and honest life oz they dyed.

The.xviii. Chapiter.

The Aucthor complaineth with  
great reason, of the yerres that  
be lost in the court.

**I** Wyl deinaunde of  
myne owne selfe;  
mine owne life, and  
make accoumpt of  
thesaine, to the en-  
tent that I will conferre my  
yerres to my trauelles, and my  
trauailes to my yerres, that it  
may appeare how long I leste  
of to liue, and beganne to dye.  
My life (gentle reader) hath  
n.i. not



**A Dispraise of**

not been a life, but a lōg death:  
my daies a play new for to be-  
gyn: my yerres a very tedious  
dreame: my pleasures Scorpi-  
ons: my youth a transitorie fā-  
taly. My prosperitie hath been  
no prosperitie: but properly to  
speake, a painted castell, and a  
treasure of Allcumyn.

I came to y court very yong,  
where I saw diuers maners of  
offices and chaunges, euen a-  
mong y princes that I serued.  
And I haue assayed to trauail  
by sea and by lande, and my re-  
compence was much moze then  
I deserued: and that was this,  
that sometyme I was in fauor,  
and sometyme out of fauor. I  
haue had experience of y somer  
sautes of destines: I haue had  
in the court frēdes & enemies:  
I haue

I haue had false reportes: I  
haue been euen nowe glad and  
mery, and furthwith sadde and  
sory: to daye riche, to morowe  
pooze: now mounted vppward,  
& strait throwen downewarde:  
This hath been to me a mas-  
kyng, where I haue losse both  
money and tyme. And nowe I  
saye to the my soule, what hast  
thou gotten of this great ior-  
ney: The recompence is this,  
that I haue gotten there a gray  
head, fete ful of y<sup>e</sup> goutte: mouth  
wout tethe: raines full of gra-  
uel: my goodes layd to pledge:  
my body charged w<sup>th</sup> thought:  
and my soule litle clensed from  
synne. And yet is there moze  
seyng y<sup>e</sup> I must nedes speake,  
that is, that I haue returned  
my body so wery, my iudgemēt

**A Dispraise of**

dull, my tyme so lost, the best of  
my age so passed, and that is  
worst of al, I founde no tast in  
any thing that is in the worlde:  
so that to conclude, I am of my  
selfe al wery of my selfe. What  
should I more tell or say of the  
alteracion of my life, and of the  
chaunges of fortune? I came  
to the court innocent, and come  
from it malicious: I went thi-  
ther true and meanyng truth, &  
returned a lyar: I went thither  
humble, & returned presump-  
tuous: I wet thither sobze, and  
returned a gurmard & gluttō:  
I wente thither gentle and hu-  
maine, and returned cleane cō-  
trary. Finally in goyng thither  
I marde my self in all pointes:  
And I haue no cause to laye y  
faut in my masters, for y vices  
be soone



The Courtiers life.

soone learned wout a master, & cannot be forgotten without a corrector. O miserable that I am, I kept in the court an account of my goodes, to knowe how they were wasted, and not for to distribute them to the poore: I toke hede of my honoz for to encrease it, not for to better my selfe by the tyme: I toke care of them that shuld pay me, to know what was owyng me, and not that I might gette to profite the poore withal, but to pfite in riches and not in vertue. I helde an accoumpt with my seruautes, to none other purpose, then to know how long thei had been with me & serued me, & not to enquire what life thei led: Finally, I held a coumpt of my life, but it was moze to  
n.iii. conserue

A Dispraise of  
conserue it, then to correct it.

Lo, beholde, this was my account, this was my calculation, this was the Arismetrique that I learned in the court.

Let vs yet go a litle further and se mine exercises. I neuer was yet in the court but I found to whom I bare malice, or els that enuied me. I was neuer yet in the palaice but I founde a window open, and a courtier murmur. I neuer yet spake to princes, but I went from them not cōtented in my mynde with some parte of their answer. I neuer yet went to bed without complaint, nor neuer did ryle wout a sigh. If I went about to do any good thing, my great affaires hyndered me. If I would study, my felowes letted me

me. If I went to take any honest and quiet pastyme, myne affaires would not permit me. If I kept my selfe solitary and from companie, my thoughtes martyred me: Finally ther was neuer any thynge that so vexed my heart as the lacke of money in my purse. And yet all this is nothyng, remembryng that I was euer enuyous to suche as were myne equalles: a flatterer to my superiours, and without pitie to mine inferiours: & where I phansied one, I bare hate almost to all other. I found euery man worthy of reproofe, but against my selfe I could not suffre a worde to be spoken. O howe forgetfull haue I been, whiche should forget or a morsell of meate had been put in



**A Dispralle of**

my mouth, and haue talked aloud to my self alone, as it had been one that had been made: How often hath chaunced me þ in comynng from the counsaill wery, or frō þ palaice thoughtfull, I would not heare myne owne seruaūtes speake, nor dispatche suche as I had to do w= all: How many tymes haue I been so drouned in busynes, that I could not moderate my pensiuenes, although my fren= des did counsaill me to the contrary: O alas, how many times hath my mynde pressed me to leaue the court and the worlde, and to yelde my selfe to some solitary desert, as an Heremite: because I sawe þ kyng auauice him and him, and I put backe as a person halfe desperate.

**More**

Howeouer to fulfil my traua-  
les, alwaies I wente askyng &  
serchyng newes of the affaires  
of y<sup>e</sup> court: alwaies harkenynge  
what one sayd of another: al-  
waies spyng and watchyng: &  
all this considered, I found by  
myne account, that I liued in  
heauynes, captiuitie, and state  
of damnacion.

Let vs yet go farther: If I  
were riche, one or other serched  
some meane to deuour me: If  
I were pooze, I found none to  
succour me: my frendes cryed  
out vpon me, and mine enemies  
sought my death. Ouermuch  
bablyng of the courtiers brake  
my braines: and muche silence  
made me to slepe, and the solici-  
tude caused me to be sad: And  
ouermuch company oppressed  
u. v. me

A Dispraise of  
me: muche exercise weryed me,  
and idlenes confounded me.  
To cōclude, I so burdened and  
bexed my self in the court with  
so muche trauail in naughtyness,  
y<sup>e</sup> I durst not desire death,  
although I had no desire to  
liue.

### The.xix.Chapiter.

The aucthor maketh account of  
the vertues that he lost in the court,  
and of the euil customes that he  
learned there,



But nowe to pro-  
cede, my fortune  
passed, my frēdes  
dyled, my force de-  
cated, and my first  
fashions failed: ¶  
if al my paines had been ended  
at the first tyme when I came  
to



The Courtiers life.

to the courte, howe happye had  
that been for me: but nowe all  
consumed, I complaine singu-  
lerly of my traitorous hearte,  
which would neuer cease to de-  
sire vaine thinges, and the cur-  
sed tong to speake sclaūderous  
thiges. O gentle reader, be not  
wery, if I tel thee in fewe wor-  
des the difference betwixte him  
that I was when I went first  
to the court, & that I am nowe  
since I haue been in the court.  
First and before that I did cast  
my selke into this perilous la-  
byrinthe (which is to say a pri-  
son full of all snares) I was a  
good deuout person, gētle and  
fearefull: and since I haue ler-  
ned to be a mischieuous fellow,  
nowe in doyng good, and litle  
or nothing regardyng y<sup>e</sup> welth  
of

A Dispraise of

of my soule. I went thether be-  
yng very yong and of good dis-  
posicion, and came from thence  
deffe, & more then spurblinde,  
and nomore able to go then he  
that is full of the goutte: And  
briiefely an olde gryfard, ful of  
ambicion, in suche wyse, that I  
am so variable, that scant I  
knowe on what grounde to set  
my feete. My heart was of so  
depraued a sort, that it desired  
to be discharged of all accions,  
and yet for all that founde no  
nother but peril and torment.  
Sondry tymes I purposed to  
leau the court, and sodenly I  
repented. Sometime I pur-  
posed not to come out of my  
lodgyng, & strait waies I was  
enforced to trot a trot to the  
court. Sometime I purposed  
not

The Courtiers life.

not to come to the palaice, and  
or I were wate I was com=  
pelled to go thither sometyne  
or it were day. I purposed to  
be nomore vexed, & sodenly my  
passions augmēted, And it fo=  
lowed that my good purposes  
ceased and went frō me; and I  
did that was leude & naughty.  
Behold how I liued of wynde  
and of fooles imaginacions as  
many a foolishhe courtier doth.  
I haue phātasied with my self  
(in the court sometyne) that I  
gouerned the kyng & the prin=  
ces, and that I came of a noble  
house and auncient stocke, ex=  
cellent in sciēce, great in fauor  
and beloued of all men, sage in  
counsail, moderate in speaking  
eloquent in wrytyng, prudent  
in seruice, and conforznable to  
all



A Dispraise of

all. But when I waked out of my folly as from a dreame, and looked to my feete, I knewe easily that I had boyn false witness to my selfe of this golden & pleasat imaginacion, & sawe of truth in other, & which I dreamyngly imagined of my selfe.

I serched the waie how to be esteemed of euery mā, holy, wise, gentle, cōtent, & of a good zeale, and a sea of sadnes. Lo this faulte happeneth to courtiers as it did vnto me, & is, to ioyne folishe libertie with vertuous honor, whiche be two thinges that cannot agree, because that disordinate will is enemye to vertue and honor. But for my part good reader, I geue thanks vnto God, my affections be somewhat wasted and mortified

The Courtiers life.

tified, for I was woont to  
in seruire, to desire daily that  
court might remoue: And  
I care not though seldo  
neuer I come from my h  
I had a speciall lust to haue  
for newes, And now I care not  
for them at all. I saw the tyme  
when I loued not to be out of  
company, And now I desire no  
thyng more then to be solitary.  
I was wont to delight to heare,  
to see iuglers, dauncers, lyars,  
and doliars: And now so to do,  
wer to me more then death. In  
like maner I was wont to so-  
lace my selfe in ffishyng, Hun-  
ting, shootyng in the Hackbut:  
And now I mynde no nother  
but to bewaile and lament the  
tyme I haue losse: and call  
to minde the first tyme that  
the

I Dispraise of

the Emperoz toke me into his  
seruice, frō thence where I was  
nourished from my tendre yeres  
in great feare, & not knowyng  
what the world was, but occu-  
pied only in my deuotions and  
lernynges: I often rose at mid-  
night, I comforted the sicke, I  
red the gospels and other good  
bokes of good doctrine. Brief-  
ly, euery mā did helpe me to be  
good, and chastised me frō euil:  
If I did well, I was praised:  
if I did euil, I was corrected: if  
I were heauye, I was comfort-  
ed: if I were angry, I was ap-  
peased: if in any agony, my frē-  
des prayed to God for me: O  
what cause haue I to repent  
out of measure, thus to haue  
forsaken rest and godly liuyng  
and to haue enioyed episcopall  
dignitie



**The Courtiers life.**

dignitie, in which the Emperoz  
set me: forasmuche as a verteu-  
ous life is þ hauen of all good,  
and the Episcopall dignitie the  
sea of all daungier. Lo how I  
haue passed my good yeres w-  
out employng my tyme wel, &  
wout knowlege what my for-  
tune should be. I do therfore  
admonishe the reader, to do bet-  
ter then I haue done in þ court,  
if þ be there, or els to forsake it  
in a better houre then I haue  
done: for so doyng thou shalt  
declare thy selfe, that thou hast  
determined to liue sagely and  
well aduised.

**The .xx. Chapiter.**

The auctour taketh his leaue  
of the worlde with great  
eloquence,

O. I.

Fare

A Dispraise of



Farewell world, forasmuch as one can  
nor may trust of  
nor in the. For in  
thy house (o world)  
the passage is paste, and that  
whiche is present goeth soone  
away, and that whiche is to be-  
gyn, commeth wonderous late,  
forasmuche as he that thinketh  
himselke most firme, sonest doth  
fall, the moste strongest soonest  
doeth breake, and perpetuities  
soonest decay, in suche sort that  
those which be destinate to live  
an hundreth yeres, thou sufferest  
him not of all that time, to live  
one yere in quiet.

Farewell worlde, forasmuch  
as thou takest, & renderest not  
again, thou weryest, but com-  
fortest not, thou robbest, but  
makest

makest no restitution, y<sup>e</sup> quarrellest, but doest not pacifie, & accusest befoze thou haue cause to complaine & geuest sentence befoze thou hearest the parties, euen till thou kill vs, and then burtest vs befoze we dye.

Farewell worlde forasimuch as in thee, nor by thee, there is no ioye wout trouble, no peace without disorde, loue without suspicion, rest without feare, abundance without fault, honoz without spotte, riches without hurte of conscience, nor high estate but he hath somewhat that he complaineth of.

Farewell worlde, forasimuch as in thy palaice promises are made & neuer kepte, men serue and haue no rewarde, they are inuited to be deceiued, they la-



bour to be troubled, & trauaill  
to take paine, they laugh and  
are beaten, thou faintest to stay  
vs, to make vs fal, thou ledest,  
to pull away strait again, thou  
honorest vs, to defame vs, and  
correctest without mercy.

Farewell worlde, thou flaunderest  
them that are in credite,  
and doest auance the infamed,  
thou lettest y traitors passe fre,  
and puttest true menne to their  
raisons, thou persecutest the  
peaceable, and fauorest the sedi-  
cious, thou robbest the pooze  
& geuest to the riche, deliuerest  
the malicious, and condemnest  
innocentes, geuest licence to de-  
parte to the wise, and retainest  
fooles: and to be shor, the most  
part do what they lyst, but not  
what they should.

Farewell

The Courtiers life.

Farewel worlde, forasynuche  
as in thy palaice no manne is  
called by his right name, for  
why? they call the rashe vali-  
aunt: the proude, colde harted:  
the importune, diligēt: the sad,  
peaceable: the pdigal, magni-  
fical: the couetous a good hus-  
band: the babler, eloquent: the  
ignozaunt, a litle speaker: the  
wāton, amozous: the quiet mā,  
a foole: the forbearer, a cour-  
tier: the tyzaunt, noble. And  
thus thou worlde, callest the  
counterfeat, the true substaūce,  
and the trueth, the counterfeat.

Farewel worlde, for thou de-  
ceiuest all that be in thee: pro-  
misynge to the ambitious, ho-  
nors: to the gredy, to come for-  
warde: to the brokers, offices:  
to the couetous, riches: to the  
o.iii. gluttons

A Dispraise of

gluttons, bākettes : to the enemies vengeance : to the thefes, secretnes : to the vicious, rest : to the yong, tyme : and to al thing that is false, assuraunce.

Farewell worlde, for in thy house fidelitie is neuer kepte, nor truth maintained : and also we may see in thy house, one glad, and another afrayd : some ouercharged : some out of the right way : some boyde of comfort, desperate, sad, heauy, ouerburdened and charged, & more then lost, and sometyme bothe.

Farewell worlde, forasimuch as in thy cōpany, he that wenes himselfe moste assured, is most vncertain, and he that folowes thee, goeth out of the way : and he ꝑ serues thee, is euil payed : and he that loues thee, is euil entreated



entreated : & he that contentes  
thee, contenteth an euil master:  
and he that haunteth thee, is a-  
bused.

Farewell worlde, forasmuch  
as thou hast such mishap, that  
seruices done and presentes of-  
fered to thee, profite nothyng,  
nor the lyes that is tolde thee,  
nor the bākettes made to thee:  
nor the faythfulnes we geue to  
thee : nor the loue we beare to  
thee.

Farewell worlde, forasmuch  
as thou deceiuest al, backbitest  
all, & flāūderest al, chasticest al,  
threttest vs al: achieuest all, and  
in the ende forgettest all.

Farewell worlde, sithens in  
thy company al men complain,  
all crye out, all wepe, & all men  
dye liuyng.

o.iiii.

Farewell

**A Dispraise of**

**Farewell worlde,** sythen by thee we hate eche one the other to the death: To speake till we lye: to loue, till we dispaire: to eate, till we spue: to drinke, till we be drōken: to vse brokage to robbery: & to synne, till we dye.

**Farewell world,** for beyng in the, we forget our infācy, & our grene age, without experience: our youth, in vices: our middle age in turmoilyng & busynes: our olde age in lamētacions, & all our tyme couēted together in vaine hopes.

**Farewell worlde,** for in thy schoole we are led til þ heete be white: the eyes blered: the eares deaf: the nostrels droppying: þ forehead wrinkled: þ fete goutie: the raynes full of grauel: þ stomacke ful of euil humours:  
the

the head full of migram: the  
body ful of sorow, & the mynde  
full of passions.

6 Farewell worlde, for none of  
thy louers come to good pfite,  
witness those that daily we see,  
are not false knaues marked in  
the face: theues hanged: man-  
quellers headed: robbers by þ  
hye wayes, sette vpon wheles:  
heretikes brent: false money  
makers boyled: killers of their  
parêtes, tozne in pieces, & other  
diuers punishmentes of suche  
as are great in fauor w thee:

7 Farewell worlde, forasmuch  
as thy seruantes haue no more  
pastyme, but to trot by the stre-  
tes, to mocke one another: to  
seke out wenches: to sende pre-  
sentes: to beguile yong girles:  
write amorous letters: ipeake

O. v.

to



A Dispraise of  
to baudes: play at y<sup>e</sup> dise: plede  
against their neighbour: tell  
newes: inuent lyes, and studie  
newe vices.

Farewell worlde, for in thy  
palaice none will do good to  
other: for the Boare fightes a-  
gainst the Lyon: the Unicorne  
against the Cocodrill: the Eagle  
against y<sup>e</sup> Vultur: the Elephāt  
against y<sup>e</sup> Mynotaure: the Sa-  
cre gainst the Kyte: the mastyf,  
against the Bull: One man a-  
gainst another, and al together  
against death.

Farewell worlde, becauie y<sup>e</sup>  
hast nothing, but to our ruine:  
For often the yerth openeth a-  
foze our feete: y<sup>e</sup> water drounes  
vs: the fyer burnes vs: the ayer  
mistemper vs: the Wynter  
doth kyll vs: the Sōmer doth  
chafe

The Courtiers life.

chafe vs. the dogges doth byte  
vs: the Cattes doeth scrat vs:  
the Serpētes doth popson vs:  
the flies doeth pricke vs: the  
flees doeth eat vs: & aboue al,  
worldely busines deuours vs:

Farewell worlde, seying no  
man can passe thy Dominion in  
suertie, for in euery pathe we  
fynde stoones to stumble at:  
bridges that brekes vnder vs:  
Snowe that letteth vs: Mou=

taines that werpe vs: Thun=  
dets that feares vs: Theues  
that robbe vs: Encoūters that  
hurtes vs, & euil fortune that  
killes vs.

Farewell worlde, forasmuch  
as in thy countrey there is litle  
health: for some be lippers, and  
some haue the French pockes:  
some the Canker, and some the  
goute

A Dispraise of

gout, and some haue the foule  
euil, and some the Sciatica, and  
some the stone, and some Quo-  
tidian feuers: some wanderyng  
feuers, some tercian & quarten  
feuers: spasmes, paulsies, & the  
moste parte sicke of faire folly.

Farewel worlde, forasmuche  
as there is not a manne in thy  
house but he is noted with some  
defaute in his person: For if  
there be any talle man, the rest  
is lubberlike. If he haue a  
fayre face, his eye shall be too  
blacke: If he haue a good fore-  
hed, it shall be wrinkeled: If he  
haue a wel fauored mouth, he  
shall lacke teethe; If he haue  
faire handes, he shall lacke faire  
heer, And if he haue faire heer,  
he shall haue a foule skynne.

Farewel worlde, forasmuch  
as



as the inhabitants in thee are  
so variable of maners and cō-  
ditions, that some will folowe  
the court, some wil sayle on the  
sea: and if one would be a mar-  
chaunt, the other will be a hus-  
bandman: If the one will be a  
hūter, the other will be a fisher:  
If one wil gouerne a Monar-  
chy, & other vnder pretēce of y,  
will pylle & poll y poore people.

4 Farewell worlde, forasmuche  
as in thy house there are none  
that prepare themselves to liue,  
and muche lesse to dye: And yet  
we see some die yong, and some  
in middle age, some in old age,  
some dye by hāgynge, and some  
by drounyng: some dye for hū-  
ger, & some in eatyng, slepyng,  
and restyng, and some oz they  
beware, and for the most parte

A Dispraise of  
oz they loke for death.

2  
Farewell worlde, forasmuch  
as we can neither knowe thy  
disposicion nor condicion: For  
if one be wise, another is a foole:  
If one be fyne, another is of a  
grosse witte: If one be valiant,  
another is a coward: If one be  
geuen to peace, another is sedi-  
cious: And if one be of a gentle  
spitt, another is very froward.

Farewell worlde, seying no-  
man can liue with thee: for if a  
man eate to lytle, he becommes  
weake: if to muche, he waxeth  
sicke: if a man labour, straitte  
he is wery: if he be idle, he li-  
ueth bestly: if he geue litle, he is  
called a nigarde: if he geue  
much, he is called prodigal: if  
a mā visite his frēdes often, he  
is called importune: if to sel-  
do me

dome, full of disdaine: If a mā  
suffre wrong, he is called false  
hearted: And if he do reuenge  
then is he wilfull: If he haue  
frendes, he is praised: If ene-  
mies, he is pursued: if one tary  
to long in a place, he waxeth  
wery: and if he chaunge to oft,  
he is grudged at. Finally, I  
say, that suche thynges as dis-  
please me, I am forced to fo-  
lowe, and that which I would,  
I cannot come by.

O worlde vncleane, I con-  
iure thee thou filthy worlde, I  
pray O thou worlde, a protest  
against thee thou worlde, that  
thou neuer haue part in me, for  
I demaūde noz desire nothyng  
that is in thee, neither hope of  
any thyng in thee, for I haue  
determinined with my self that  
posui



A Dispraise of  
posui finem curis, spes, et fortu-  
na valete. I haue finished  
worldly cares, therfore  
hope and fortune  
farewell.

FINIS.

EXCVSVM  
LONDINI, IN  
AEDIBVS RICHARDI GRA-  
TONI, TYPOGRA-  
PHI REGII.  
MENSE AVGVSTII.  
M.D.XLVIII.

CVM PRIVILEGIO  
AD IMPRIMENDVM  
SOLVM.



